

Games Monitor
Background paper on the London 2012 Olympics

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Finance, profiteering and infrastructure

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These papers are compiled from newspaper reports, academic and activist papers, and discussion postings. Any queries please to Carolyn Smith <c.smith4@lycos.com>.

Other papers in the series:

Background paper 1: Impact

Background paper 3: Governance

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Games Monitor is a network of people raising awareness about issues within the London Olympic development process. We want to highlight the local, London and international implications of the Olympic industry. We seek to deconstruct the 'fantastic' hype of Olympic boosterism and the eager complicity of the 'urban elites' in politics, business, the media, sport, academia, and local institutional community 'stakeholders'. Our network operates with an open dynamic principle and functions as a discussion forum, research body, press and political lobby. Our website and online group provide hubs for publication, information exchange and solidarity networking. We are also a contact point for local, minority and specialist interviewees for press and broadcast media.

Contact us at <info@gamesmonitor.org.uk>.

Among the tasks of a politics of morality [is] to work incessantly toward unveiling hidden differences between official themes and actual progress, between the limelight and backrooms of political life.

Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002)

It appears that the very process of development, even as it transforms a wasteland into a thriving physical and social space, recreates the wasteland inside the developer himself. This is how the tragedy of development works.

Marshall Berman (1982/1983) *All That is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (London) Verso

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1. Funding, taxes and false hopes

Just like Pepsi setting up a bottling factory in India, people needing new jobs and urban improvement want to believe the promises that the Olympics seems to offer. Just like other multinationals, governments are willing to tempt the Olympic business to their countries by offering public funds to pay its enormous infrastructure costs.

Kevin Blowe (2005) Bidding for Disaster, Radical Activist Network Newsletter, Spring edition, <www.radicalactivist.net>

1.1 Cash crisis looms

Government figures for the total 2012 budget, currently touted at £9.325 billion, have been challenged by the Evening Standard's London Editor, Andrew Gilligan (November 7, 2009), who charges that the announced sum "substantially understates the true position". An extra £2.7 billion of public spending directly on the Games and Games-specific projects has been revealed by Freedom of Information requests and other inquiries made by Evening Standard journalists. This extra cost includes: £1.15 billion spent by the London Development Agency (LDA) to buy and decontaminate the Olympic Park area; at least a further £359 million not publicly announced by the LDA, including £269 million in interest payments and £90 million in Olympic grants; £389 million for Games-specific transport improvements by Transport for London and Network Rail; about £60 million costs for Whitehall departments working on Games preparations and legacy planning; £240 million spent, or bid for, by local councils; a contribution of £110 million by the Homes and Communities Agency towards the costs of the Athletes' Village; £280 million on Olympic-related grassroots and elite sports projects; and almost £100 million in directly Games-related spending by a range of other public bodies, from the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority to the Arts Council and NHS. This takes the total cost of the 2012 London Olympics to £12 billion, a figure six times higher than the original forecast of £2.05 billion given in the London 2012 bid document in 2004. Gilligan quotes Hugh Robertson, then shadow sports minister, who described the notion of an Olympic budget as "an extraordinarily misleading term". Robertson believed that even the £12 billion figure would prove a substantial underestimate. It is not clear from media reports whether this figure includes the leaked sum of £1.5 billion, the projected total for Olympic security (Independent on Sunday, September 28, 2008; see Background Paper 3, Section 1.1).

'Proliferation' seems to be the key word here. Media controversy in November 2006 over missing VAT in the prices estimated for the initial bid unmasked a calculated deception around the projected figure in the 2012 bid document. While then Culture Secretary Tessa Jowell conceded to MPs that "the new core budget [...] has risen [...] from £2.375 billion to £3.3 billion" (J. Sherman & J. Goodbody, *The Times*, November 2, 2006) to that had to be added £1 billion for regeneration of the Lower Lea Valley, a 60 per cent contingency reserve proposed by the Treasury (taking the bill to £7 billion), security costs, VAT and monies for decontamination (another £1 billion) plus the running costs of the event itself, expected to be raised from private finance and sponsorship (an extra £2 billion and expected to rise), making a grand total of over £10 billion (*The Times*, *ibid*). Strangely the £9.325 billion figure, announced by Tessa Jowell to Parliament in March 2007, stuck in the media as the total.

Gordon Brown when Chancellor stated that the public would not have to pay the VAT costs (ranging between £250 million and £1 billion), but in 2008 this was still the subject of intense negotiations

between the Treasury and the Culture department. The extra costs in the 'core' budget were put down to a rise in the price of steel, construction inflation and revised transport costs. However, The Times (ibid) revealed that the figure of £3.3 billion includes a £400 million payout to the consortium CLM (managing building work), and an unspecified subsidy towards construction of the Athletes' Village and the broadcasting centre (originally to be met by private funding, though see below). The Times notes that Jowell suggested that the National Lottery should bear the brunt of the extra £900 million 'core' cost (hitting small sporting and other voluntary and cultural organisations all over the country), and was pressing the Chancellor for extra funds. £15 million was spent on the London bid alone (Blowe 2004).

Parliamentary scrutiny has been critical. Specifically:

- On June 27, 2007, the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee published its scrutiny of the Olympic funding fiasco. The Report on the Preparations for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games Risk Assessment and Management noted that while there had been a serious underestimation at the time of the bid of the costs of the Games, private sector funding had been "seriously overestimated". "The Department expected to raise £738 million of private sector funding, which would have covered a quarter of Olympic costs, but now there is little prospect of significant private sector funding being achieved", it said, adding: "We intend to return to the budget of the Games on the basis of a further report by the Comptroller and Auditor General. As the ultimate guarantor of funding for the Games, the Government is financially exposed".
- Later, on July 2, 2007, the House of Commons Culture, Media and Sport Committee expressed "deep concern" about Olympic raiding of funds from the culture sector. "When we took evidence for this inquiry, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) was anticipating losses of income, based on Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) estimates, of £75 million less in Lottery ticket sales and up to £68 million less as a result of changes in the allocation of Lottery proceeds, mostly in the three years up to 2012. So when, in March 2007, the Secretary of State announced that there would be an additional allocation of £675 million of Lottery money to help fund the 2012 Games, we asked the HLF to let us know what the impact on HLF funding would be. HLF told us that there would be a further reduction of income of £90 million, so that the total cash loss from heritage to the Olympics would be £161.2 million plus the diversion of resources through the special Olympics lottery. HLF has acknowledged that [this makes] it impossible for the HLF to support major projects like the transformation of the British Museum [...]. The chairman (sic) of the MLA said that the cuts 'put at risk the opportunity to showcase our country and create a legacy to the Games'". This increase of £675 million takes the total contribution from the National Lottery up to £2.2 billion (Evening Standard, December 10, 2007). The raising of monies from the private sector for the Olympics and cuts in state funding will also damage prospects for sponsorship of the cultural sector, the committee said. John Tusa, managing director of the Barbican Centre, is on record criticising the raiding of Lottery funds, in the context of possible reductions in general arts funding. Dame Judi Dench has called for arts funding to be ringfenced and accused the Government of diverting money from theatre and film to pay for the 2012 Games (Evening Standard, December 11, 2009).
- The same select committee published a further report on April 23, 2008, complaining again that "such a radical revision of cost estimates has been damaging to confidence in the management of the overall programme. It has also exposed the Government and the Games organisers to the charge that the initial bid was kept artificially low in order to win public support" (as mentioned in Background paper 1, Section 2.3 Relocation of Firms, The Observer had reported [D. Campbell, September 18, 2005] that "London 2012 sources admit privately that some of the costs [of financing the relocation of firms] were deliberately underestimated or disguised during the bidding process"). The contingency fund is a total of £3.72 billion, including contingency provision built in to individual projects and a £238 million security contingency (somewhat blown, see above), while £3.482 billion is available to the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) and forms 62 per cent of its base costs). The committee recommended that a "substantial proportion [...] should be regarded as untouchable before 2011", adding that any unspent contingency to be funded from Lottery revenue should be returned to the benefit of non-Olympic lottery distributors". The

committee raised concerns over expectations of revenue from post-2012 land sales (downturn in the property market), and noted that “under current plans assets may take until 2030 to be realised”. Particular scorn was poured on the financial management of the Aquatics Centre, which at £303 million will cost more than four-times the figure provided in the Candidature File submitted in 2004. “The history of the Aquatics Centre shows a risible approach to cost control and [...] the Games organisers seem to be willing to spend money like water”, it said. The report also commented on the amount of money expected to be raised from the private sector (£100 million) to fund elite sport in the run up to the 2012 event: “[I]t may prove very difficult to raise, as no private sector sponsor will be able to cite any association with the London 2012 Games, in order to protect the [London organising committee (LOCOG)] sponsors. The effect is to introduce an element of uncertainty into a long-term funding programme, hobbling financial planning. We believe that it will turn out to be a misjudgment and an unwelcome diversion of effort”.

- A review of preparations for the Games, by business tycoon David Ross, has found that the cost of the main 80,000-seat stadium has risen by £29 million since November 2007, to a projected total of £525 million. Increased costs have been offset by savings elsewhere, leaving an increase in projected cost of £16 million (Games Monitor, July 2, 2008).

M. Mathiason (The Observer, August 14, 2005) suggested that any budget overspend would be footed by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (now the Department for Communities and Local Government), affecting aggregate housing target delivery in the South East and regeneration projects in northern industrial towns. Meanwhile Tessa Jowell has refused to bow to Tory demands for a cap on council tax levy in London if costs escalate (Evening Standard, October 25, 2005). An article in The Times (P. Webster, July 6, 2006) stated that ministers would be asked to increase the overall regeneration budget to £5 billion after a reappraisal of facilities, costs and Legacy proposals.

- A KPMG report for the LDA on the Olympic Legacy Directorate (OLD) budget has revealed a massive shortfall in its budget for land for the Olympics (H. Mulholland, The Guardian, September 11, 2009). Originally estimated by officers in Spring 2009 to be between £86 million to £100 million, the shortfall now stands at £159.8 million. The gulf should have been picked up more than a year earlier, the report stated, and before Conservative Mayor Boris Johnson took over. The OLD budget relates to the complex task of land remediation and purchase, which involved 3,000 separate land interests. “While there is no evidence of fraud relating to the budget shortfall, KPMG identified a number of long-standing weaknesses in the Olympic Legacy Directorate: poor documentation, poor performance control and monitoring, poor financial controls and the lack of long-term budgetary control. Two members of staff have been suspended although there is no evidence of wrongdoing by either”, the article related. The OLD budget is not part of the £9.325 billion ‘total’ budget claimed by Tessa Jowell. Small-scale local regeneration projects formerly funded by the LDA are likely to be hit. The Observer (N. Mathiason, September 20, 2009) also suggests that the bungle will force a £21 million cut in funding to Olympic Legacy projects. “Inadequate controls meant that neither the person overseeing the £1.3 billion Olympic budget [for land acquisition] nor his finance manager were qualified accountants. Despite this, they were allowed to sign off invoices of up to £7 million without approval”, The Observer said.
- Nine days later, The Observer (ibid) broke another catastrophe in the finances of the LDA: this time, a whopping £800 million of debt racked up buying land for the Games. The paper suggests that this huge debt threatened to delay or even derail work to sell land and find tenants for facilities after the Games. The LDA was due to hand over control of the area to the new Olympic Park Legacy Company, and wanted to transfer the debt at the same time. However, the chairman (sic) of the Legacy company, Baroness Margaret Ford, has been adamant that the new organisation should not be saddled with this debt, believing that it would deter potential investors. Ford has persuaded senior Government officials to transfer the £800 million to the DCLG. But if this goes ahead it would breach stringent departmental expenditure limits laid down by the Treasury. Insiders at the LDA say they were not prepared to keep the debt on its own books as this would mean a rise in London council tax. The situation could have forced the Government to issue fresh legislation to force the LDA to keep the debt. In the event, the deal was signed off on September 29, 2010. Furthermore, the

subsumption of the LDA into the Greater London Authority (effectively its abolition in line with other Coalition Government regional proposals) by March 2012 will leave a further £387 million of outstanding Olympic debt (now owed to the Government) that could have implications for mayoral funding of economic development in the future, Paul Norman of the Estates Gazette revealed (October 12, 2010). This dates, he related, from this deal to transfer ownership of the LDA's Olympic land debt-free to the Government and City-Hall owned Olympic Park Legacy Company. Under the deal, the LDA, which has already spent £1.345 billion developing the Olympic Park, received £138 million in cash and was relieved of £300 million of committed future contributions to the Olympic Delivery Authority. It was also required to repay £369 million of its Government debt between 2011/12 and 2013/14 with remaining liabilities paid over a 10-year period. Norman quotes the London Assembly: "In 2011/12, the LDA will still have £387 million of Government debt to repay. If the LDA is abolished these commitments will need to be settled as part of the winding-up process". Additionally, Norman writes, the LDA has £25 million of OPLC commitments and land purchase compensation claims outstanding estimated at £41 million. The Assembly states, he writes, "It is not yet clear how these liabilities will be met".

- Scrutiny of the GLA's Draft Budget 2010/2011 by Paul Norman of Estates Gazette (December 17, 2009) revealed that the LDA would in fact have spent £1.795 billion on the Olympics in total by the end of 2013. By the end of 2008, it had spent £936 million on land assembly and remediation of the Olympic Park. It forecasts that a further £140 million would be spent in 2009/10 with the all-in total rising to £1.154 billion by the end of 2012/13. Between December 2009 and the end of 2012/13 a further £500 million will be provided for the Olympic Park and related expenditure via a public sector funding package. The remaining money will be spent on management, Business Improvement District support and Legacy development.

The Sunday Times reported (D. Cracknell, January 6, 2008) Tory fears that further council tax rises may be imposed to fund the 2012 event and associated regeneration. Not only would households in London be affected but also parts of the Home Counties. Former London Mayor Ken Livingstone promised that the burden falling on London taxpayers would be limited to £20 a year per household. However, the Tories warn that the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority (LVRPA) may be used as a trojan horse to raise further finance. Answers to parliamentary questions have revealed that ministers have already instructed officials to talk to the LVRPA about financial liabilities arising from the 2012 Olympics. The Sunday Times notes that London boroughs have already raised fears about cost overruns on maintenance after the Games.

- A Freedom of Information request to the 2012 Olympics host boroughs by Games Monitor activist Charles Batsworth (Games Monitor, May 6, 2009) confirmed his suspicion that local council funds and resources are being diverted into Olympic matters in ways that are not easily identifiable or accounted for. He says: "The lack of transparency and thorough accounting procedures make it almost impossible to calculate how much council tax payers are contributing to the 2012 Olympics as a whole, over and above the highly publicised £9.3 billion budget [...] The failure to identify and track the true expenditure by local authorities will make any future evaluation of the overall impact of the Olympics impossible; but this is one of the recurring characteristics of the Olympic Games — the failure to accurately record and analyse the real costs and benefits". Newham failed to provide any information on the grounds that it would exceed the search limit of 2.5 days. Batsworth suggests that this indicates that they have no practical means of tracking their Olympic spending. Hackney (LBH) also declined to provide any financial information, but indicated the wealth of time that staff are dedicating to Olympic promotion and the proliferation of policies and projects around the 2012 event, its Legacy and perceived benefits to the borough. The LBH Statement of Accounts for 2007/2008 shows a reserve of £9.3 million for maximising the benefits and offsetting the costs of the 2012 event. Tower Hamlets (LBTH) supplied some figures, totalling over £1.3 million over three years. This revealed payments to a Five Boroughs Unit (executive director on an advertised salary of £125,000). "Based on current contributions, £5 million of council tax revenue will be paid to the unit overall by the five boroughs", Batsworth hazarded, "for 'maximising opportunities', 'engaging with neighbourhoods', and 'giving strategic and operational coherence'". The LBTH 2012 Unit is funded by the Local Public Services Agreement Reward Grant (not local tax payers).

Batsworth points to the opportunity cost of services that would otherwise be provided by this grant. Waltham Forest (LBWF) expenditure totalled £541,525.04 over three years. However, they point out that this “does not give an accurate reflection of the overall expenditure towards the 2012 Olympics” and that the cost implications across the Council as a whole would be “practically impossible to measure”. They also explained that the 2012 team costs for the first two years (£550,000) were met by the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) Batsworth comments that “This does not appear to be the type of use for which the fund was intended. LBWF are still embroiled in a scandal concerning the misuse and maladministration of NRF funds”. He was still waiting for a response from Greenwich.

- The London 2012 Olympic Legacy could be damaged by the Government’s decision to cut council budgets, the Mayor of Newham has warned (Metro, undated, posted to Games Monitor Discussion List by J. Cheyne on December 19, 2010). Sir Robin Wales told the BBC that budget cuts being forced on local authorities were “savage, reckless and callous”. Three of the Olympic boroughs — Newham, Tower Hamlets and Hackney — are all subject to an 8.9 per cent reduction in spending from April 2011. Sir Robin said the cuts would mean that Newham Council would have to save £43 million in 2011/12.

Tax payers have been forced to foot the entire bill for the Athletes’ Village. This prospect was first flagged up by Matthew Beard in the Evening Standard (October 8, 2008). “Games chiefs today admitted they may be forced to nationalise the £1 billion Olympic Village amid the current economic turmoil”, the paper said (this later turned out to be from John Armitt, chairman [sic] of the ODA). And indeed this turned out to be the case. On May 13, 2009, the BBC broke the news that the Village was to be fully publicly owned. Olympics minister Tessa Jowell said private funding had been rejected as it was “not a good deal for the tax payer”. Or rather, Games Monitor would surmise, too dodgy to contemplate in the current political climate. Lend Lease had been prepared to invest up to £150 million in equity and £225 million in bank debts (!) to finance the construction. The ODA budgeted £250 million for the complex, and a total rescue will need another £750 million from public funds. Paul Kelso, writing in the Daily Telegraph (October 15, 2008), reported that the ODA had already been forwarded £95 million out of contingency funding to enable work on the Athletes’ Village to proceed, and that the Government expected to provide another £155 million after contractors Lend Lease failed to raise finance from the market. “If the tax payer is funding this now, then the Government needs to ensure that tax payers have a greater share of the equity when the Village is sold off as housing after the Games”, Hugh Robertson, then shadow sports minister told the Daily Telegraph. As late as January 2009, the Government was holding out for a private sector solution, according the use of a further £326 million from the contingency fund to keep work going while talks continued (O. Gibson, The Guardian, January 21, 2009). The number of flats proposed in the Village has been scaled back from 4,200 to 2,800. The Media Centre in Hackney, equivalent in size to Canary Wharf’s Canada Tower, will also be funded completely by the public purse, despite scepticism from opposition MPs (ibid).

- The ODA was forced to write off more than £10 million after it failed to attract private investment for the Olympic Village and Media Centre, reported Allister Hayman in Regen.net (July 17, 2009). The ODA’s annual accounts show that £7.5 million spent on the designs for the International Broadcast Centre and Main Press Centre in Hackney Wick were “deemed unrecoverable” after the deal with the ODA’s development partner Carillion Igloo was terminated in November 2008 due to a failure to attract private finance following the global financial crash. The ODA also became liable for £3.5 million of bank expenses and legal fees when the deal with developer Lend Lease over the Athletes’ Village was dropped. The accounts also show that in 2008/09, the ODA paid £151.6 million to CLM, the main delivery consortium, including £60.2 million in performance-related bonuses. In the previous year it had paid ‘only’ £16.1 million in bonuses out of a total payment of £87.6 million.
- Whoops! The Olympic Delivery Authority unwittingly handed over £2.3 million to conmen posing as employees of Skanska, one of the contractors on the Olympic Park. However, it is understood to have recovered “nearly all of the money” (J. Magnay, Daily Telegraph, April 18, 2011)
- “The most pessimistic estimates of the final bill for the London 2012 Olympics were vindicated yesterday when the most senior civil servant [Jonathan Stephens] involved on the project

admitted that the entire £2.7 billion contingency fund for the project would probably be spent", reported Paul Kelso of *The Guardian* on November 15, 2007. "Until now the Olympic officials have insisted that the new construction budget was broadly comparable to the 2004 figures once VAT and compound inflation to 2012 prices were taken into account. The likelihood that all contingency will be used explodes that argument. [...] Stephens and David Higgins, the ODA chief executive, came under sustained criticism for the disparity between the [initial and revised] budgets, with Edward Leigh, the Conservative chairman (sic), telling them he had little confidence in their ability to control costs as the Games approached".

- The regeneration needs of east London outside the Olympic Park are in danger of being ignored by central Government, according to Peter Andrews, chief executive of the [now defunct] London Thames Gateway Development Corporation (LTGDC). The LTGDC area, twenty times the size of the Games precinct, has received only £100 million, against the £5.8 billion budget to build Olympic facilities, including £1.7 billion for funding regeneration and infrastructure in the Olympic Park area. "We're left scratching around for cash", he told Joey Gardiner of *Regeneration & Renewal* (April 13, 2007). "I'm worried we won't get sufficient funds to deliver our vision. With the Olympic effect, there's a danger it will get ignored".
- Under the Barnett Formula, "Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland may lay claim to hundreds of millions of pounds as their rightful equivalent to London's Olympic regeneration money", *Regen.net* reported (L. Walker, June 26, 2008). The issue was raised during a Joint Ministerial Committee meeting between former justice secretary Jack Straw, Scotland's First Minister Alex Salmond, Wales' First Minister Rhodri Morgan, and Northern Ireland's First Minister Peter Robinson. In a separate report, SNP Culture, Media and Sport spokesperson Pete Wishart MP hit out at LOCOG after it was revealed that just seven of the approved 1,174 Cultural Olympiad projects were in Scotland. Research by *Plaid Cymru* has revealed a 50 per cent dip in Lottery funding for organisations in Wales, down from £65 million between 2000-2005 to £31 million between 2005-2010. The party charged that the London 2012 Olympics was failing to benefit areas of the UK outside the capital (J. Cheyne, *Games Monitor*, April 28, 2010).
- Tory councillors in outer London boroughs Barnet and Richmond-on-Thames have protested the disproportionate levy on their often elderly constituents. Reuben Thompstone, candidate in Woodhouse ward in Barnet, has demanded that the Olympic boroughs where infrastructure is being improved should contribute a larger share (as things stand, he claims, Barnet council tax payers are paying £4 million more than those in Newham) (Letter to *Edgware & Mill Hill Times*, April 6, 2006; L. Marzouk, *This is Local London*, March 9, 2006).
- Leader of Richmond Council and GLA member, Tony Arbour, has called for the Games to be funded nationally (H. Farquarson, *This is Local London*, February 17, 2006), a demand echoed by pensioners who presented an 8,000 signature petition to Parliament in December 2007 (*BBC News*, December 3, 2007). Meanwhile, Thomas and Rita Glenister, of Darlands Drive, Barnet, went to court in 2006 over their refusal to pay the 2012 Olympic levy, saying they would rather go to jail than pay. "We have paid our rates for 51 years and have never broken the law", Mrs Glenister, 72, told the *Edgware & Mill Hill Times* (September 14, 2006). "It is completely unjust. This is the last straw. We've worked hard all our lives. I'm determined not to pay this. I'll go to prison. Someone has to make a stand against this". Her husband added: "We don't even know whether we are going to be alive by the time the Olympics comes round in six years time. I'll be grudgingly willing to pay the rate when every tax payer in the country is paying it and not just Londoners".

Utilities bills may be forced upwards to cope with the extra demand that the Games and its Legacy developments are anticipated to make on supply. Thames Water chief executive Bill Alexander considered appealing to the water regulator for an 'interim determination' to help raise monies for infrastructure investment to meet Olympic demand (A. Jameson, *The Times*, September 12, 2005). The company is proposing two major extensions to its London Ring Main to improve water supply flexibility to the east of the city. In January 2006, the Thames Tideway Strategy Group recommended that the Government build a £1.7 billion 'super sewer' under the Thames, stretching from Hammersmith to Barking, to prevent sewage overflow, which could mar the Games. This would add £45 to Londoners' annual water rates (M. Weaver, *The Guardian*, January 21, 2006), although

the scheme is described by water regulator Ofwat as too risky. Bill for the burial of overhead power lines (direct or tunnelling) has been passed on to the ODA. However, extension to the National Grid itself, necessary for the Legacy developments, is footed by the customer (Letter from National Grid to Waltham Forest Planning Department, October 8, 2003). The Construction Products Association argued that rising energy costs could add £90 million to Olympic delivery (CN, May 4, 2006).

A 2008 report questioned the potential economic benefit from the Games. In *The Olympic Effect: How London Will Remember 2012*, Standard & Poor suggest that London is unlikely to profit to the same extent as previous hosts Barcelona, but will not be burdened by massive debt if the event is unsuccessful, as the London bid was largely underwritten by the UK Government (Regen.net, June 24, 2008). Earlier estimates failed to foresee the escalating costs of staging the Games. Consultants Arup, working for the LDA in 2002, placed possible benefit at a net gain to the UK economy of £82 million (a fraction of the total costs of development), with a downside risk of £145 million (Crookson, 2004). Paul Dales of consultancy Capital Economics calculated in May 2005 that the total benefit of the London Olympics to the British economy would be 0.34 per cent of GDP over seven years, or just 0.05 per cent per annum, in a word “negligible” (A. Patrick, Daily Telegraph, May 21, 2005).

Sydney 2000 cost over twice the pre-bid figures. Barcelona 1992 left a US\$20 million debt (Murphy, 2004). In Athens, total costs were forecast to be at least four times as high as the bid committee’s initial budget (Blowe, 2004; *The Observer*, September 19, 2005). The *Observer* reports (N. Mathiason, *ibid*) that “Greece had its credit rating downgraded by Standard and Poor at the end of [2004], in large part because of the cost of staging the Games”. The Brazilian Olympic Committee has already announced its intention to spend more than US\$14 billion in preparation for the 2016 Games in Rio de Janeiro. US\$48 million was spent on the Rio bid (www.chinaview.cn, November 12, 2009). Singapore’s Youth Olympics of 2010 ballooned from S\$107 million to S\$387 million (J. Cheyne, *Games Monitor Blog*, September 17, 2010).

- In February 2009, Russia cut its budget for the hosting of the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi by 15 per cent. Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Kozak said that an assessment of construction projects found it would be possible to save about £5.8 billion. This optimism was short lived. On June 7, 2010, BBC News reported that the 2014 Games would cost £20 billion to stage, nearly three times more than the original estimate. The BBC’s Richard Galpin in Moscow said that given the scale of corruption in Russia, many would suspect that costs were being inflated by bribes paid to officials to secure contracts for Olympic projects. One businessman has already alleged that he had to pay US\$4 million (£2.7 million) to a Kremlin official to ensure he kept a building contract, amounting to 12 per cent of the total value. Preparations for the Olympics have also been affected by a lack of interest from firms in bidding for projects, forcing an extension of tender deadlines. Land acquisition has also proved problematic as owners were refusing to sell at prices offered by the Government (BBC News, February 17, 2009).

1.2 Retail therapy

Remarkably, refutation of the inevitable benefits of hosting the Games is considered within the Olympic planning documents themselves (Retail, Leisure and Sport Impact Assessment Appendices, Appendix 4 to the Environmental Statement, January 2004) as part of an attempt to calculate the amount and type of retail floor space that the Games could support. The Atlanta Games of 1996 was a retail disaster. The report relates:

Retail sales in Atlanta grew 1.1 per cent at the time of the Olympics in August 1996, which when compared with other cities was one of the lowest rates of growth for the month in the US. Many restaurants were empty during the Games, even Olympic merchandise stores failed to achieve solid sales, and sales in some suburban shopping centres fell by 50 per cent.

It concludes that low spending “was due in part to the low cost nature of the Atlanta Games, which saw a limited number of new facilities constructed in the city centre to capture the potential direct and indirect spending”.

Even with a buoyant context, consumer spending seems confined to officially-sponsored goods and hotel chains, hardly an economic miracle. Major beneficiaries in New South Wales of the 2000

Sydney Olympics were the clothing and soft goods sector (souvenirs), and the hospitality and services sector (take-away food). The Australian Bureau of Statistics estimated a net increase of A\$164 million in retail turnover in New South Wales in September 2000. The Sydney Olympics also saw "an increase in services spending and souvenir shopping, but [this resulted] in a generally flat retail environment for other sectors during the two-week period". Visitors broke their time between the Olympic Park and the central city (one destination, Darling Harbour experienced a 292 per cent increase in visitors). Developers made significant investment to the city's retail core. However, the consultants comment: "[A]s has been the case for most host cities the Olympics were a mixed blessing". Main legacy of this consumer rush is retail floor space now serving those living in the former Athletes' Village.

Optimism in the (international) hotel industry about the awarding of the 2012 Olympics to London seems misplaced. Research carried out by the European Tour Operators Association (ETOA) suggests that UK tour operators are suffering a 50 per cent decline in business for 2012 (TravelMole.co.uk, March 15, 2011), according to a survey of attendees at the British and Ireland Marketplace. ETOA's research showed that London hoteliers were skyrocketing rates over the Olympic summer in 2012, pricing out many long-haul visitors to the country (this amounts to over one million tourists). The organisation warned that reduced availability of hotel rooms plus high prices have caused tour operators to simply not sell the destination. This in turn has a detrimental effect on UK tourism as London is the gateway city. In 2010, ETOA executive director, Tom Jenkins, said: "Precisely because London is one of the top international destinations, it has more to lose. At the moment, a false expectation of bookings is in danger of destroying an export industry. For August 2012, ETOA members — who alone regularly deliver over 15,000 hotel rooms per day — cannot reserve space. Without any reservations to sell, nothing can be sold" (J. Cheyne, Games Monitor, September 21, 2010). Oxford Economics have predicted that London will lose £375 million from tourism as visitors delay plans to come to the city until after the Games (J. Magnay, Daily Telegraph, April 12, 2011). Fear of construction work on tube and rail lines is also deterring tourists from visiting before the Games. However, they have estimated that tourism gains for London will amount to £1.47 billion over the 10-year period 2007-2017. The immediate benefits during the Games is predicted by Oxford Economics to be around £300 million.

ETOA's gloom is well founded. A 2006 report by them suggested that countries hosting the Games suffer from a pronounced drop in tourism growth in the years surrounding the event. It stated that there is no long-term boost to tourism from hosting the Games, despite promotional assertions. Athens, for instance, benefited from an 8.2 per cent increase in arrivals in 2002 (over 2001), but in 2003, numbers fell by 1.5 per cent. One month before the start of the 2004 Games, visitor arrivals were down by 12 per cent. Australia saw a growth trend of over 10 per cent decline two years before the Sydney Olympics in 2000; this persisted for over two years after the event. In the five years before the 2000 Games, Australia and New Zealand's tourism exhibited a similar rate of growth, New Zealand lost no similar ground over the same time frame. The report cites a similar Olympic effect in Atlanta, Barcelona and Seoul (www.etoa.org). Beijing saw international visitor arrivals plummet by 30 per cent in the month before the 2008 Games, compared with the previous year. In the months after the Games, the tourism slump continued with international arrivals down by more than 20 per cent. Beijing fared considerably worse than the rest of China in 2008, which was not a strong year in general for tourism in the Asia-Pacific region, ETOA reported (Games Monitor, November 5, 2009). ETOA's later figures for visitor numbers are shocking: Sydney received 97,000 foreign visitors rather than the anticipated 132,000, Athens saw fewer than 14,000 (anticipated 105,000), and Beijing only received 234,000 instead of the 400,000 projected (J. Cheyne, Games Monitor, September 21, 2010). Simon Jenkins in the Evening Standard (September 21, 2010) relates that in 1984, Disneyland lost visitors during the Los Angeles Games and that the Costa Brava turned down during Barcelona. The Vancouver Sun reported that tourism revenue has declined in British Columbia and just before the 2010 Winter Olympics was now below the levels recorded five years previously (D. Bramham, November 27, 2009). Delhi's Commonwealth Games saw cancellations of almost 50 per cent (J. Cheyne, Games Monitor Blog, October 4, 2010).

- Christopher Rodrigues, chairman (sic) of tourism promotion agency VisitBritain, has admitted in an interview in India's Economic Times that the 2012 Olympics will drive tourism away from London. In contrast to the bizarre claims of 'putting London on the map' all too familiar from Olympics boosters, Rodrigues points out that "London is reasonably well known" and is

“already on the map”. “The major impact of the Olympics on tourism in the UK is going to be on other places, because many people tend to avoid the city because of all the Games hype”, he said (C. Batsworth, Games Monitor, July 11, 2009).

- Hotels, outraged by the price gouging being practiced by LOCOG’s partners Thomas Cook and CoSport, are withdrawing rooms from its preferential rate scheme. Julian Cheyne comments on the Games Monitor Blog: “At the heart of the matter is the undisclosed payment made by Thomas Cook and CoSport to LOCOG to become official resellers of these rooms. This kind of corruption lies at the heart of the Olympic system whereby a range of commercial organisations pay organising committees to gain monopolistic access to the Games. Price gouging was supposed to be outlawed at the 2012 Games. In reality, it is central to the whole event” (April 22, 2011). JAC Travel, the UK’s largest inbound tour operator, is now encouraging hoteliers to break with LOCOG. JAC’s chief executive Mario Bodini, also a senior figure in the UK inbound tourism association UKINbound, said: “We applaud the British Hospitality Association for putting pressing questions to LOCOG. We would like its members to know that if they decide to withdraw rooms from LOCOG, JAC Travel stands ready to contract with them on the usual terms and to sell their rooms at reasonable rates to genuine visitors from overseas” (J. Cheyne, Games Monitor Blog, May 10, 2011). The Evening Standard reported (M. Beard, March 23, 2011) that leading hotel groups were considering legal action against LOCOG over their contracts to supply rooms at preferential rates, subsequently resold at grossly inflated prices by official 2012 travel agent Thomas Cook. One package with a face value of £1,740 for three nights at the Hyatt Regency Churchill had been priced at £6,499.
- London Citizens and the Unite union, meanwhile, lambast the labour conditions of hotel workers. “London’s hotels are not, at present, fit for an Olympic city” their report Rooms for Change, Putting London Hotels on Track for the Olympics (March 2009) said. “The heart of the problem is the treatment of workers and the management’s reliance on a transitory, migrant labour force that is hired and fired at will. ‘Dickensian’ is not too strong a word to describe conditions that prevail in some of London’s leading hotels”.
- The Hogg Robinson Group (HRG) has urged businesses to “think carefully” about whether they will need to be in London during the Olympic Games due to a lack of hotel space in the city. Although business travel is quieter during the summer months, HRG anticipates that as few as 12,000 to 18,000 London rooms will be available for the general marketplace. HRG also warned that inbound flights to the UK could be restricted as overseas visitors come in for the Games (TravelDaily.co.uk, July 20, 2011).
- A 2006 study by the Young Foundation (Bridging the Gap: the London Olympics 2012 and South Asian-owned Businesses in Brick Lane and Green Street) found that fewer than one in five respondents in these key east London restaurant locations were confident that the Olympic Games would confer either medium or long-term benefits on their existing businesses. The remaining respondents were convinced that either the benefits would be short term or stated that they were uncertain about what exactly the Olympics might mean for their businesses. A majority doubted that agency support which might enable them to take up opportunities afforded by the Olympic event would be forthcoming. Nine out of ten said they had received no information from any agency linked directly with the London Olympics. Half of all respondents stated that they did not think that the organisers of the London Olympics were sensitive to the needs of their community. Some respondents in Brick Lane highlighted development pressures in the Spitalfields area, and suggested that the London Olympics, and the large retail and leisure chains that it might attract, could instead displace existing retail and consumption uses. Clearly, there were fears that the Olympics could put restaurants in Brick Lane out of business altogether.
- Small independent hotels and restaurants have found themselves unable to profit from advance bookings. PriceWaterhouseCoopers is assisting European Olympic committees, who are worried about businesses going bankrupt, by setting up accounts in which money for books can be kept but not paid to the companies until the event. The scheme is called ESCROW (J. Cheyne, Games Monitor Blog, September 20, 2010).

2. Profiteering

2.1 Property speculation

To bowdlerize John Hannigan (1998) on the construction of pleasure and profit in the postmodern metropolis, a theme familiar to commentators in the US is emerging in the Stratford area and projected plans for the Olympic precinct, in the synergy of sports, hotels, (themed) restaurants/bars, entertainment and high-tech. The 2012 Games will deploy what officials are calling a 'digital skin' that will surround Olympic venues with dynamic displays to show news, visitor information, event results and entertainment (J. Bonner, December 18, 2009). One might say that what is significant is not so much the role of consumption in helping to assert the status and identity of regenerated 'places', but the fact that consumption is increasingly occurring within the context of packaged leisure experiences, creating if you prefer, a contained (and containing), prefiltered 'experience' of urban living. Such spaces are run on an operational model based on the four pillars of efficiency, calculability, predictability and control. These principles guide the smooth monotones of fast food chain McDonald's, and the management of urban space by these principles can be viewed as part of a trend towards a more rationalised, if glitzy, social space (G. Ritzer, 1993). Who would have thought that Stratford, dog-end of east London, would become a European testing ground of such a brave new world?

Carolyn Smith, Project Mimique

In March 2006, concerns were raised in the House of Commons over compensation payments to London & Continental Railways for land required by the Olympic precinct development passed to them earlier by the Government at no cost. The House of Commons Transport Committee stated: "It may be some compensation was justified. We are not in a position to take a firm view. We are however disturbed by the appearance of this transaction which gives the distasteful appearance of the tax payer subsidising the private sector twice over [...] London's intention to bid for the Games is also of long standing. If the Government had inserted the appropriate reversion clauses into the agreements on this land, then there would have been no question of paying the developers to acquire the land [formerly] in public ownership [...] We are very disappointed that the Government has demonstrated so little acumen and foresight" (House of Commons Transport Committee Report: Going for Gold; Transport for London's 2012 Olympic Games, March 16, 2006).

In 2005, Labour MP Clive Betts highlighted the need for transparency in public-private sector deals for delivery of the Olympic developments and has called for parliamentary scrutiny of such arrangements. Deals were being discussed with Stratford City Developments ahead of consent for the Olympic bill to ensure conversion of flats into housing for 4,500 athletes (R. Booth, The Guardian, July 29, 2005). In 2003, the consortium Stratford City Developments and the LDA agreed not to frustrate the other's planning applications.

- The scale of payouts by the LDA on land required for Olympic developments has been indicated by answers to a Freedom of Information request by Games Monitor activist Julian Cheyne (January 22, 2010). Just over £15 million was paid for the freehold on the Park Village Estate, and a similar sum was paid for the leasehold alone of the Clays Lane Estate, plus just over £630,000 in disturbance costs. This latter comprised £64,982.11 (incl. VAT) for legal fees, £63,608.32 (incl. VAT) for property consultants fees, and £501,809.43 to Peabody in

respect of rental voids. While freehold interest had been acquired on the Gypsy and Traveller sites, prices had not been agreed, and lease agreements had yet to be agreed with the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority over the Eastway Sports Centre site and East Marsh.

- Property Week reported (March 5, 2008) that the LDA could have been forced to pay up to £3 million in costs to Neptune, a property developer, after failing to justify an attempted Olympic CPO. Neptune, awarded costs at the end of February 2008, was seeking £2 million for legal and professional fees and an additional £1 million for tenants on the land. Decision was to be made at the High Court at an unspecified date. The LDA had wanted to use the site to relocate the bus depot formerly at Hackney Wick, but this was contested by Neptune as “inappropriate”.

The Olympic bid itself was highly disruptive of the speculative property economy. Legal Week (May 4, 2006) reports delays in land deals stretching back over three years before the bid decision was announced, impacting on local and regional property markets. Richard Guyatt, property partner of Bond Pearce, told the website: “Most property deals in the south have been affected by the Olympics, which has taken a broad brush approach to all of east London. [...] For expanding companies it has been a real problem. It is also hard to find comparison prices [for land in the affected area]”. Once the bid decision was announced, estate agent Dan McLeod of Atkinson McLeod told BBC News (July 6, 2005) that it was “the best news for the property market in this area for years”. McLeod said: “Almost overnight any land that can be developed will go”, stating that in the few hours since the announcement, he had already received calls from interested investors.

The market was reported as buoyant with speculative investor enquiries. John Kennedy of estate agents Knight Frank told the Evening Standard (ibid) that over half of the enquiries his company was getting were from Chinese investors who had experienced the Beijing effect first hand. Research by Knight Frank showed that 42 per cent or 32,000 of the 76,000 homes under construction in the Greater London area are in east London, as are more than half of the 130,000 homes with planning permission but not yet under construction. Comparisons are made by estate agents to the massive take-off of development around Canary Wharf.

The largest development in the area, plans of which were well underway before the Olympic bid announcement, is the Stratford City site, comprising 140,000 square metres of retail space (Westfield Stratford City shopping centre), plus an additional 10,500 square metres of additional retail, primarily local shops and eateries; 465,000 square metres of office and other commercial business space; 120,000 square metres of hotel and conference space; housing for 11,000 people (4,500 homes), health and educational facilities plus 32 acres of public open space (Future Stratford website, quoted by S. Dowding, Games Monitor, July 27, 2011). Meanwhile, Self-Catering-Breaks News reports that Travelodge has raised £100 million for new hotels in the Olympic area (A. Bray, December 14, 2009).

The BBC note that Barcelona, Sydney and Athens all saw house prices rise by more than 50 per cent in the five years before the Games (all higher than their national average). Figures for London are more remarkable, but crucially much of the rise in house prices came in the five years before the Olympic bid result was announced. Figures from the Nationwide Building Society, reported by the Evening Standard (H. Duncan, April 9, 2010), reveal that house prices in Hackney rose by 129 per cent 2000-2010, Waltham Forest by 131 per cent, Tower Hamlets by 137 per cent and Newham by a giant 151 per cent, all faster than anywhere else in London over the last decade. Closer inspection reveals that between 2005 and 2007 there was a slight Olympic effect. A Halifax Estate Agents’ study revealed that house prices increased differentially across areas close to the Olympic site after the bid decision. Leytonstone saw the highest rise, up 23 per cent, compared to London as a whole up only 15 per cent; this was followed by Hackney 21 per cent, Clapton 18 per cent, and Leyton 13 per cent (About Property, February 2, 2007). Since the financial crash of 2008, real estate analysts seem to disagree on exactly how the Olympic effect is manifesting. Bloomberg (cited by C. Batsworth, Games Monitor, September 2, 2011) suggest that far from booming, the areas nearest the Olympic Park are blighted, with prices falling and an overall rise of a ‘mere’ 19 per cent, compared to a London figure of +27 per cent (Batsworth does not give a time frame for these figures, but we assume that it is fairly lengthy). Savills plc (also quoted by Batsworth, ibid), who have the job of marketing the Main Stadium, Media Centre and Athletes’ Village, offer the insight that: “The north-south divide opening up in the country as a whole actually is an east-west divide in

London”, which as Batsworth points out, was what we’ve been told the Olympics was supposed to change. Meanwhile, the Evening Standard (M. Bar-Hillel, October 4, 2011) reports that: “The rise in asking prices for property in London’s Olympic boroughs is almost twice that in other parts of the capital”, bucking the national trend of falling property values. Citing the website FindaProperty.com, the Standard relates that in the 12 months to September 2010, the average asking price in Greenwich, Hackney, Newham and Waltham Forest increased by three per cent. In the same period, prices in other London boroughs grew by an average of only 1.6 per cent, while across the country, asking prices fell by 0.3 per cent. The only exception was Tower Hamlets where prices remained fairly stagnant, dropping by about one per cent over that year. The sharpest rises were allegedly in Newham where they rose by seven per cent. However, despite this, according to FindaProperty.com, the borough remains London’s second cheapest. A report by the Halifax, cited in research done by the University of East London for the London Assembly, *A Lasting Legacy for London?* (May 2007), states that the five-year run-up to Manchester’s Commonwealth Games in 2002 brought a 102 per cent house price rise to the city, against 52 per cent for the North-West region and 83 per cent for the UK.

The rental market has not been so secure, although reports suggest that while prices have now (February 2012) gone through the roof, initially there was a trough: London property consultant David Salvi of Hurford Salvi Carr, told *The Times* (A. O’Connor, June 21, 2008) that supply in east London had risen by about 40 per cent in six months while rents had dropped by 5 per cent. In June 2008, prices in Stratford were a third lower than in Greater London, and one bedroom flats were down 20 per cent from their peak. The Evening Standard (*ibid*) reported a mixed start to 2010. Rents in London as a whole were up 15.7 per cent, while Hackney just up 2 per cent, Newham just 6 per cent, but Tower Hamlets up 16 per cent and Waltham Forest up 18 per cent. The Independent noted (K. Rawlinson, R. Hall, J. McCann and H. Ewan, May 27, 2011) that beyond the Olympic area in Stratford, agents in London were reporting rent increases of around eight to 10 per cent over the 2010/11. But on February 2, 2012, MSNBC.com alleged that London landlords were evicting tenants to cash in on the Olympic Games and the rents that could be levied from tourists. “Homes in the east London boroughs [...] are fetching between five and 15 times their typical rates as properties are rebranded as short-term ‘Olympic lets’. Some landlords are also enforcing expensive penalty clauses for tenants who want to remain during the gathering of the world’s top athletes”, they reported, something backed up in the article by housing charity Shelter’s head of campaigns Antonia Bance. In Dalston, one bedroom apartments that normally fetch around £300 per week are now being advertised at £1,625 a week, the news service reported, while in Newham, a three bedroom house on a council estate is on the rental market for £15,000 for three weeks. Website FindaProperty.com report (March 8, 2011) that rental prices for the Games fortnight in one host borough (Greenwich) have shot up to 35 times the usual price.

- The Legacy neighbourhoods have been named as Chobham Manor, East Wick, Sweetwater, Marshgate Wharf, and Pudding Mill (which goes to show that you should never put these things out to competition: the judges can’t be trusted). The area will get its own postcode of E20.
- Top floor apartments in the Athletes’ Village will be sold for up to £1 million after the Games are over (I. Pocock, *Sunday Times*, June 11, 2006). On October 1, 2010, the ODA announced that it was returning to the commercial market to attract private investment in the Athletes’ Village complex (O. Gibson, *The Guardian*, October 1, 2010). On August 12, 2011, it was announced that the Athletes’ Village had been snapped up by developers Delancey and Qatari Diar for £557 million. UK taxpayers were left £275 million out of pocket (J. Kollwe, *The Guardian*, August 12, 2011).
- Shares of residential property developer Telford Homes rose by 14 per cent in the year 2009/2010 (to March 31). The company puts this down to Olympic-related regeneration stimulating demand in east London (R. Hemming, *The Guardian*, April 13, 2010).
- Two housing associations have agreed a landmark deal with an IKEA-owned development company that will see 1,500 homes built on the edge of the Olympic Park (N. Duxbury, *Inside Housing*, July 16, 2010). Southern Housing Group and East Thames Group have teamed up with development company Landprop to build the scheme on the 13-acre site in Sugar House Lane, Bromley-by-Bow. Described by *Inside Housing* as “one of the most

significant private investments in the Olympic zone in two years”, the developer, which is owned by Inter Ikea, the investment arm of the Swedish furniture company, bought the land for an undisclosed sum from receivers CB Richard Ellis. The site had been owned previously by developer Cleveland. The deal represents the largest investment on the Olympic fringe since Westfield bought the Stratford City site in 2008. The 1,200-home Strand East development, built around canals is eulogized as a “mini-Venice” with moorings, a water taxi service and a floating cocktail bar. It will feature a 130 ft-tall illuminated wooden tower, reported the Evening Standard (R. Lydall, October 20, 2011). Southern Housing and East Thames are already partners with developer First Base in the special purpose vehicle Triathlon Homes which is building the 2,818 homes that make up the Athletes’ Village.

- A ‘boiler room’ scam linked to non-existent housing plots near the Olympic site has conned more than 100 people out of hundreds of thousands of pounds. Fraudsters offered shares in companies supposedly owning land in Stratford which they said would ‘rocket’ in value before the Games, police told BBC One’s Inside Out programme. Their victims could not contact them once their cheques had cleared. Lorna Rapley said that her late father, Alf, lost £37,000 in the fraud, while John Middlemass, who lost £80,000 in the scam, said that he was persuaded to join “what sounded like a good investment” by criminals who “ruined” his life (BBC News, November 8, 2010).
- University College London (UCL) and Newham Council announced plans in November 2011 to explore the establishment of a new campus for UCL in Newham on the site of the Carpenters Estate in Stratford, in addition to the university’s Bloomsbury location. Under the terms of the agreement signed by UCL and Newham Council, both parties have six months from that date to progress proposals for the development, which could include teaching and research space as well as additional community, residential and commercial space. The proposed site has been earmarked for redevelopment since 2010. The development proposed would be consistent with Newham Council’s Stratford Metropolitan Masterplan as well as UCL’s Bloomsbury Masterplan, which sets out UCL’s vision for developing its estate. It is anticipated that the Mayor of Newham and Cabinet will consider the proposals developed in mid-2012. There is no obligation from either Newham Council or UCL to proceed with the plans after then. UCL has appointed Drivers Jonas Deloitte as its lead adviser in determining the feasibility of the project (M. Slavin, Games Monitor, November 25, 2011). There is considerable opposition from people on the estate who have been kept in the dark about the proposals. Keep an eye on Games Monitor for further developments!

[T]he indirect impacts of processes of gentrification and price inflation can be severe. In Barcelona, for instance, the 1992 Games was partly responsible for massive increases in costs of living in the city. Between 1986 and 1992 the market price of housing grew by an average of 260 per cent, and this expansion continued through the 1990s with significant increases in social inequality. Likewise, in Sydney, rates of evictions and homelessness increased markedly in the neighbourhoods alongside Olympic development. The consequence is that although development takes place in such cities it does not always lead to the [regeneration] of its poorer urban neighbourhoods and communities. In fact, it can make things worse by creating blight, congestion and [...] displacement.

Mike Raco (2004) Whose Gold Rush? The Social Legacy of a London Olympics, in A. Vigor et al, After the Gold Rush, A Sustainable Olympics for London (London) IPPR, Demos

Rio de Janeiro property specialists Colordarcy report that international enquiries for Brazilian property have increased by 60 per cent since the announcement was made that the 2016 Olympic Games would be held in the city (www.halifax-international-expats.com, December 4, 2009).

2.2 Construction

French multinational GDF Suez, contracted to construct and run the energy centres in the Olympic Park and the adjacent Stratford City, plus the associated service infrastructure, has been

internationally condemned for ecological damage and social injustice in the building of massive dams in the Amazon rainforest (C. Batsworth, Games Monitor, April 19, 2010). "GDF Suez' major involvement in the Madeira River Jirau Dam hydroelectric scheme in Brazil earned it a nomination for the 2010 Public Eye Awards, organised by Greenpeace and others to publicise the most environmentally destructive corporate practices. The Jirau Dam project is accused of displacing thousands of indigenous residents, unauthorised deforestation, causing pollution, violation of labour laws and fomenting conflict through political manipulation. GDF Suez and its partner companies in the ESBR construction consortium have been fined for illegal deforestation, and are already co-defendants in civil action lawsuits in Brazil filed by the State and Federal Public Prosecutors' Office and non-governmental organizations", Batsworth reported. "GDF Suez is also bidding for the Belo Monte dam on the Xingu river, an even larger hydroelectric project threatening ecological disaster in pursuit of economic growth. It is attracting fierce international and indigenous opposition. The cause is being championed by film director James Cameron. An estimated 20,000 people will be displaced and 500 square kilometers of forest submerged".

CCHP (combined cooling heating and power) units in the Olympic Park area have all capital and running costs met by GDF Suez — in exchange for a 40-year sole concession to supply these services in the area, essentially creating a privatised utility monopoly within the Olympic Park and Stratford City with a guaranteed stream of profits going to the operators. In effect the Olympic Park is being mortgaged to GDF Suez and its shareholders, with no control over the use of the profits from the massive future revenue from utility bills. While it may be true that co-generating heat, cooling and power is more efficient, this will simply translate into increased profit for the operator.
Charlie Batsworth, Games Monitor, April 19, 2010

Several US giants were involved in partnerships bidding for Olympic construction work. KBR, formerly Kellogg Brown & Root, the engineering and construction arm of Halliburton Co., bid with Bovis Lend Lease (of the Australian Lend Lease Corporation) and UK design and engineering consultants Capita Symonds for a no-risk engagement (as managerial partner) with a chance to bid for cherries in the Legacy phase. Between 1995 and 2000, Halliburton Co. was headed by the then US Vice-President, Republican Dick Cheney. The firm was under investigation for the overcharging of contracts to the Iraqi Government-under-occupation. Gordon Brown was forced to clarify to MPs (The Observer, July 23, 2006) whether he had any dealings with Bechtel, another controversial US construction company bidding for the contract to oversee the building of the main Olympic facilities. Bechtel has been dubbed (The Observer reported) "the working arm of the CIA". The firm was the first company to be awarded contracts by the Bush administration in the aftermath of the Iraq invasion. Bechtel also advises the UK Government on nuclear energy. Demonstrations in Bolivia (O. Olivera, The Guardian, July 19, 2006) against the privatisation of water to the company in 2000 forced the firm to leave the country. Bechtel prosecuted the Bolivian Government in international courts, pressing for £13.6 million in damages and costs. However, after international pressure, it dropped all claims to Bolivian water in January 2006.

In the event, Laing O'Rourke in partnership with Mace Ltd. (project management) and environmental evaluation company CH2M Hill (together called the CLM consortium) won the contract to manage construction of the 80,000 seater Olympic Stadium and the Athletes' Village (S. Kernon, Bloomberg, August 30, 2006). Contracts for the building work itself were awarded separately by the ODA later on, and Lend Lease was one of the successful firms, gaining the contract for the Athletes' Village (see this paper, Section 1.1). Laing O'Rourke built the Fifth Terminal at Heathrow Airport where 900 workers walked out over bonus payments in December 2005-January 2006 (BBC News, December 16, 2005). It also had construction contracts on the Channel Tunnel Rail Link, Canary Wharf and Gatwick Airport. In October 2004, the company faced widespread walkouts and wildcat strikes from UCATT and GMB members over a new contract which reduced severely both regular and holiday pay, and altered bonuses and holiday conditions. Staff had been told to sign the contract or face the sack (Workers' Liberty, October 27, 2004). Workers at the Kings Cross CTRL site claimed that the company management had intimidated migrant workers around the signing of the contract. The CLM consortium has worked on five previous Olympic Games: Torino 2006, Athens 2004, Salt Lake City 2002, Sydney 2000 and Atlanta 1996 (Contract Journal, August 30, 2006). Responsibility for redeveloping the venues and the Athletes' Village after the event will also fall to the consortium. The awarding of

the management contract to CLM caused some controversy within the industry and Parliament as building tycoon Ray O'Rourke had given a substantial donation to "Tony Blair's 2012 bid team" and substantial help in kind (Evening Standard, September 3, 2006) in the run-up to the IOC decision.

CLM will only be paid if delivery meets specified performance targets determined by the ODA. Anticipated profits can swiftly turn into multi-million losses. The Observer (N. Mathiason, March 26, 2006) reported that Australian firm Multiplex could pay up to £183 million in fines for failing to deliver the Wembley stadium on time.

- Olympic bosses are making firms sign contracts which prevent them from talking publicly about all details of the work for six years (BBC London, January 26, 2009). If a leak is suspected, the contract allows the ODA to search a firm's premises and emails. While the ODA maintains that the contracts were a standard confidentiality agreement, BBC London's Olympics Correspondent Adrian Warner suggested "The companies I have talked to are shocked they have to sign a document which effectively allows 2012 to walk into their premises and start searching them. Legal experts have told me these contracts are draconian". BBC London asked organisers of the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics whether they had imposed similar widespread restrictions in firms in Canada, and were told emphatically that they had not. Firms sign away the right to talk to any third party, without the ODA's permission, about technical plans, the cost of venues, a project's progress, environmental issues, health and safety measures and any discussions with ministers.

2.3 TV rights and sponsorship

The IOC sold TV rights for the 2010 Winter Olympics and the London 2012 Games to a European consortium a month before the London bid decision was announced for a "record" £394 million (The Observer, July 10, 2005), although bidding for the 2014 and 2016 Games is likely to top this (www.wgal.com). IOC President Jacques Rogge was reported as expecting US\$3.5 billion (£2.02 billion) in total to be generated by TV rights in the four-year run up to the 2012 Games (Financial Times, quoted by United Press International, May 30, 2005). It is estimated that about 15 per cent of this would come from new media and telecommunications (K. Grohmann, Reuters, May 9, 2008). UPI state that "[a] new standardised open tender process that has increased competition among broadcasters is credited with the increased estimated revenues. [...] [Since] the 2008 Beijing Olympics host cities will get a fixed amount of broadcasting rights revenues", rather than the current 49 per cent. For the 2005-2008 period alone, the IOC will receive about US\$2.5 million from broadcasters, US\$866 million from its TOP sponsors' programme, plus monies from tickets and licensed programmes. Total Olympic revenues for 2001-2004 exceeded US\$4 billion. Some 92 per cent of that amount was distributed to IOC partners (national Olympic committees, international sports federations and Games organising committees), while 8 per cent (£320 million) stayed with the IOC for operational costs (Reuters, *ibid*).

The Institute for Practitioners in Advertising have complained that the London Olympic Games and Paralympic Games Act 2006 which sets up the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) and defines marketing prohibitions "is so extreme that it could technically lead to pubs being prosecuted for using chalkboards to flag up [TV] coverage of the Games" (A. Fraser, BBC SPORT, August 16, 2005). The Northern Echo faced a warning from Olympic lawyers not to use Olympic insignia to promote a Sport Aid fundraising event (a campaign taken up by the Newspaper Society, and promoted through local newspapers across the country) to provide grants for prospective Olympic talent and raise money for grassroots sport (June 5, 2006). Restricted use of the Olympic brand is considered essential for protecting budget profits, and legislation was passed as early as 1995 to ensure copyright (1995 Olympic Symbol Protection Act). At least 31 small firms throughout London reflecting the Greek diaspora will be forced to change their company names and shop fronts or face prosecution. British Telecom's Business and Services Phone Book for London 2003/4 revealed enterprises as diverse as a shipping agent, an airline, sign engravers, a patisserie, two property companies, two hotels, two cafes, one printing firm, debt recovery and employment agencies. Olympic Removals, a family business based in Waltham Abbey, have been told to pick another logo or face the consequences. They fear that any court battle could ruin them (I. Jensen, www.thisislocalondon.co.uk, July 17, 2009). Another firm, this time offering "Olympic" mortgages, will have to withdraw or rename its promotion.

- Index on Censorship (A. McColgan, January 29, 2009) details how Section 16 of the Act provides a legal basis for the executive regulation of all advertising “in the vicinity of London Olympic events”. The Act provides that the regulations “may apply in respect of advertising of any kind”, including non-commercial advertising and “announcements or notices of any kind”. What is considered to be ‘advertising’ may include “the distribution or provision of documents or articles”, “the display or projection of words, images, lights or sounds”, and “things done with or in relation to material which has or may have purposes or uses other than as an advertisement”. The executive is empowered by the Act to impose obligations on the owners and occupiers of properties, and breach of the regulations will be punishable by an unlimited fine. Further the police will be entitled forcibly to enter property to “remove, destroy, conceal or erase” anything deemed inconsistent with the advertising regulations. Aileen McColgan, Professor of Law at King’s College London, notes that in the first place, the Act’s provisions on advertising are objectionable because they cede to the executive the power to make draconian rules, rather than risk Parliamentary voting on the content of those rules. However, she goes on to suggest that “the Olympic Act would provide a legal basis for the criminalisation of those wearing Pepsi-Cola T-shirts or Burger King baseball caps (Coca-Cola and McDonald’s being official sponsors)”, and that “the extension of ‘advertising’ to include non-commercial advertising and ‘announcements or notices of any kind’ [...] [could cover] the display of a notice protesting against sponsors’ labour practices, or their contributions to global warming or the epidemic of obesity”. “Further”, she relates, “advertising restrictions may apply well beyond Olympic arenas to, for example, the front windows of private homes in the vicinity of the Games”. Finally, she touts the idea of a legal challenge to uphold the rights of freedom of expression enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights and the 1998 UK Human Rights Act. “It is a matter of regret, however, that the Olympic Act has created the scope for regulations which exercise an extraordinary chilling effect on freedom of expression”, she says.
- LOCOG is objecting to plans to trademark the name of the forthcoming Great Exhibition 2012, a series of nationwide initiatives culminating in a two-week festival planned for August 2012. They have given the Great Exhibition Company until June 27 to withdraw their application or face legal proceedings under the 2006 Act. LOCOG reportedly object in particular to the use of “2012” in the event’s name, as they consider that date is now widely used to refer to next year’s Games. “It’s certainly true that LOCOG have been given very strong rights for this specific event and have made clear that they intend to exercise their powers to their full limits”, Lorna Brazell, a copyright lawyer for firm Bird & Bird told The Independent (R. Sharp, June 14, 2011). “This kind of debate is going to get more intense as the Olympics approach. In this case, it is the broadest reach of their powers I have seen so far”.
- The Olympic Borough blog carries a story (February 8, 2011), also raised by the Independent (K. Rawlinson, February 8, 2011), of the plight of Café Olympic in West Ham Lane. Algerian owner Kamel Khichane says he took advice from Newham Council before renaming his premises some years ago. But now, as LOCOG moves to protect its branding, he may be forced to rename his café at the cost of £3,000. The Council told him that as long as he did not represent the Olympic rings, he would be within the law. Mr Khichane has fallen foul of the Olympic Symbol etc (Protection) Act 1995, which was amended after London won the Games.
- Author Robert Ronsson received legal threats from LOCOG over his 2007 novel entitled, the Donovan twins: Olympic Mind Games. He published the book regardless. LOCOG later withdrew their complaint and did not prosecute (R. Sharp, *ibid*).
- LOCOG has warned travel agents hoping to cash in on the 2012 Games that they cannot use terms such as London 2012, London 2012.com, Olympic(s) or the Olympic symbol in business names, promotions or advertising material. Some agents have already received warnings (R. Sharp, *ibid*).

The Government was also planning to introduce a further curtailment of grassroots commercial reference to the Games with the London Olympic Association Right, again under the pretext of protecting Olympic brands and prohibiting visual and verbal association with the event (A. Bryce, The Times, July 31, 2006). Fines were projected at up to £20,000.

The Times commented: "Opponents of the LOAR provision argue that it goes well beyond existing British intellectual property laws and significantly limits the freedom of commercial expression and competition", and "ensure[s] [...] sponsorship fees are kept at a premium". Athletes' rights to earn income from endorsements may have also been curtailed. The British Olympic Association plans to carpet-register a series of London 2012-related images with every trademark class throughout the UK and Europe, to provide a "firm foundation" for brand-infringement actions.

- The Daily Telegraph (March 28, 2009) reports that advertising agencies competing for the prize 2012 Games contract discovered that they would be forced to become a tier-three sponsor to gain the contract at the cost of nearly £10 million. This would entail doing millions of pounds-worth of work for nothing other than being named as a sponsor. Two major agencies told the Sunday Telegraph that they are now not interested in pitching for the account, although they refused to be named. Industry sources told the Telegraph that the marketing benefits of having an agency associated with Olympic work were limited and not sufficient to justify the financial commitment. 'Value-in-kind' sponsors include chewing gum maker Trident, technology group Airwave, Boston Consulting Group and solicitors Freshfields.

The BBC reports that "London" has secured first rights to "almost all the billboard space around the city for the key time around the Games", to inhibit ambush marketing. Such brand enclosures can extend to the prohibition of fans' clothing at the Games itself. Dutch football supporters were forced by FIFA officials to remove their patriotic orange lederhosen, sponsored by a Dutch beer, at a World Cup match against Cote d'Ivoire during the summer of 2006 (The Guardian, June 19, 2006).

- The Vancouver Courier (December 16, 2009) reports a news brief in the Province newspaper which relates how "volunteers at the Vancouver 2010 Olympics [would have] to cover up any blatant logos on their shoes in order to comply with the Olympics 'clean venue' policy". CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) revealed the contents of an IOC document which stated: "Brand protection teams of two or more members will conduct surveillance on foot, within and around each venue or cluster of venues, at neighbouring areas and in the city to ensure that venues are clean internally, to carry out surveillance of ambush marketing, and to handle and report such activity in the appropriate manner with the goal of ceasing such activity". A little earlier, on December 4, 2009, the Vancouver Sun reported one hotel manager who said that the hotel would "be careful to display the right Olympic corporate brand names to reflect the sponsorship of the 2010 Games. "Panasonic is a Games sponsor, so when we renovated our revolving space on the 19th floor, we bought Panasonic televisions rather than some other brand", he said. "Maybe they'll see we're using their products in an awesome space".
- London's five Olympic boroughs (Greenwich, Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest) claim they should be singled out in Olympic branding to compensate for the amount of disruption that the Games will cause. Other London councils want a more liberal attitude to the 2012 logo's use to boost sports participation across the capital. Local Government Chronicle website LGCPlus.com reports (J. Illman, January 22, 2009) that the IOC believes there should be only one version of the logo. This appears to prevent the use of the slogan 'host borough' for some and 'hosting 2012' for other authorities, and has been promoted as a compromise. "There are lots of tensions in London local government" said one senior local government source.

Matthew Beard (Evening Standard, February 25, 2008), reported that the IOC is set to make over US\$1 billion in sponsorship in the lead-in to the 2012 Games (a figure that includes the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver), a "new record". Protected Olympic trademarks include the use of the words 'Olympic', 'Olympiad' and 'Olympian', '2012', 'London 2012', 'games', 'medals', 'gold', 'silver', 'bronze', 'sponsor', 'summer' (!); insignia such as the 2012 Games logo (and mascots), the Olympic rings, Team GB, the British Olympic Association and the British Paralympic Association logos, London's bid logo; derivatives of London2012.com; and the Olympic motto 'Citius, Altius, Fortius' (Faster, Higher, Stronger). Unofficial ticket sales and merchandise will also become unlawful. TOP partners have precedence over sponsorship deals negotiated in London — LOCOG cannot do deals with rivals. Sponsoring companies are mandated to participate in 'community' and schools programmes in return for the use of the London 2012 logo. Successful firms will have paid at least £50 million for a six-year association with the Games.

Marketing magazine reported a 'clutter' of agencies other than LOCOG offering Olympic sponsorship deals, causing confusion among firms (D. Barrand, June 7, 2006): "As well as each of the national associations for individual sports, a variety of government-funded sports bodies, charities and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport sections are actively selling off the back of 2012. Their over-zealous approach has led some marketeers to claim they are turning their backs on 2012 due to proposals' lack of clarity. Industry experts have been quick to lay the blame at [former] chancellor Gordon Brown's door after he used his [2006] March budget to ask sponsors to fill in an extra £100 million hole in athletes' funding".

Fair Olympics (2004) point out that corporate sponsorship dates back only to the Los Angeles Games in 1980 when government funding was withdrawn (incidentally, also the Games where volunteering was introduced on a grand scale).

- Dow Chemical have been chosen to provide the 'wrap' for the Main Stadium. Union Carbide, the company at the centre of the 1984 Bhopal gas disaster, is (since 2001) a 100 per cent owned subsidiary of Dow Chemical, with Dow executives sitting on the Board. The Bhopal Medical Appeal is addressing the effects of a second disaster at Bhopal (not the 1984 gas tragedy). The groundwater in Bhopal, around the abandoned Union Carbide factory, is heavily contaminated with toxic chemicals. This groundwater has been the only reliable drinking water source for tens of thousands of people for many years. The chemicals in the water attack the body's organs causing serious chronic health problems. They are carcinogenic, and they cause birth defects. The contamination is being caused by water leeching through toxic waste that was buried on the factory site and by leakage from solar evaporation ponds located just outside the factory site. The solar evaporation ponds are known to have been leaking years before the disaster (something revealed by an internal Union Carbide memo from 1982). Union Carbide was aware of the environmental and groundwater contamination after carrying out tests in the area, but chose to keep the findings of these tests secret. The toxic contamination of the area became public knowledge when Greenpeace tested the area and published a report, in 1999, labelling the area a "global toxic hotspot". The US courts accept that the water contamination is a separate issue from the gas disaster. Dow Chemical as owners of Union Carbide, and designers of the chemical process, are liable for the continuing contamination, under the 'successor liability' principle (established in both US and Indian law). In the takeover of 2001, Dow acquired all of Union Carbide's assets and its liabilities. Dow has accepted Union Carbide's liabilities in the USA (Briefing from the Dow Medical Appeal, 2011).
- On January 25, 2012, Meredith Alexander, a member of the Commission for a Sustainable London 2012 resigned in protest at Dow's sponsorship of the 2012 Games. Alexander, who works for the development charity Action Aid told BBC's Newsnight (she resigned live on air) that she wanted to bring attention to the "toxic legacy" of Bhopal. "This is an iconic case," she said. "It's one of the worst abuses of human rights in my generation and I could not stand idly by". She had been a commissioner since 2010 (BBC NEWS, January 26, 2012).
- Barry Gardiner MP has charged that the procurement process that led to the appointment of Dow Chemical Company as the sponsor for the wrap of the 2012 Main Stadium was "rigged" in favour of the company. "The entire procurement process appears to be a sham. The application window was only 10 days long. That is only 10 days to apply for a purported £7 million contract, something unheard of in Government or business worlds" he told an adjournment debate in the House of Commons, adding "We have now heard opposition from the Indian Olympic Association, Olympians, the Indian Government and even LOCOG's own sustainability commissioner. The Government must now intervene in this mess and act to kick Dow out of the Olympics" (Press Trust of India, February 22, 2012).

Other sponsors with 'criminal records' in the eyes of the activist left include: BP, McDonald's, Rio Tinto Zinc, Coca-Cola, ArcelorMittal, G4S, Samsung and (sponsors of the Paralympics) Atos Origin. A website dedicated to exposing the evils of corporate Olympic sponsors can be accessed at <corporaterulesok.wordpress.com>. In 2011, News International lost its exclusive access to British athletes after the ongoing phone hacking scandal that led to the closure of the News of the World; papers The Sun, the Times and the Sunday Times will likely lose their 'Official Newspaper of Team 2012' strapline (Google Hosted News quoted by J. Cheyne, Games Monitor Discussion List, July

21, 2011). Omega, through its company Swiss Timing, has been caught up in allegations of corruption around the Delhi Commonwealth Games. Two of the most senior Commonwealth Games officials have been charged with criminal conspiracy and cheating under the Prevention of Corruption Act in relation to the awarding to Swiss Timing a contract worth several million dollars. The company has denied the allegations (J. Magnay, Daily Telegraph, December 2, 2010).

The Olympics has been described as “the ultimate test” for the UK Bribery Act, which came into effect on April 1, 2011 (J. Abbott, Daily Telegraph, December 17, 2010). It is estimated that £100 million will be spent on corporate events and hospitality during the 2012 Games. Individual countries are already setting up ‘houses’ in and around London. These will be the focus of activities for athletes, sponsors and businesspeople. However, under the UK Bribery Act, certain types of hospitality and gifts may be considered a bribe and may be illegal. The penalties can include unlimited fines and heavy prison sentences (up to 10 years) for employees, directors and companies. Current guidance suggests that business lunches are reasonable but lavish corporate events may lead to undue influence, and there remain many grey areas. With a single VIP hospitality package for 10 people to attend the Olympic opening ceremony running to more than £55,000 (E. Fournier, CityAM.com, March 31, 2011), businesses are advised to err on the side of caution (by Games Monitor, naturally).

2.4 Ticketing

Prices of tickets have caused outrage. The Daily Star (T. Savage, April 24, 2011) calculated that some seats cost nearly £400 an hour, which is nearly twice that of the (soccer) Champions League final at Wembley. Lowest value for money can be found at the women’s 10-metre synchronized diving event, which comes in at £450 for 70 minutes, while top-tier seats at the women’s all-round gymnastics final are £225 an hour. Swimming finals cost £450 for between 80 and 110 minutes of action (making them £337 an hour). All these prices are put in the shade by the top-price view of the Opening Ceremony, which at £2,012 for a three-hour show, works out at £670 per hour or more than £11 per minute. Compare all this to the price of an all day ground pass to the Olympic tennis at Wimbledon: at £20 for a full eight hours of sport, it works out at just £2.35 an hour, and the preliminary fencing matches are also a ‘decent draw’ at £20 for more than seven hours. Quite why these sports have been so downgraded, the Daily Star fails to explain. Official prestige tickets, which include food and drink as well as a seat, will be among the most expensive in the history of sport. These come in at £4,500 per head, and they can only be bought in blocks of at least 10 for corporate and governmental hospitality, according to a price list obtained by the Mail on Sunday (N. Harris, February 20, 2011) and “yet to be made public”. Just 700,000 people out of 1.8 million applications were successful in the first round (Sunday Mirror, July 10, 2011). Unsuccessful applicants were given first priority in the second round of balloting. A total of 6.6 million tickets were available (T. Peck, Independent, June 7, 2011).

Touting is illegal, but that hasn’t stopped gangs getting their hands on tickets to hundreds of top events, including the men’s 100-metre final and Opening Ceremony, a Sunday Mirror investigation revealed (ibid). Instead of the tickets going to “ordinary fans”, they are being sold to “foreign millionaires” in executive holiday packages costing up to £40,000. The Sunday Mirror complains that the touts could make up to £40 million in profit. Fines for touting have been raised from £5,000 to £20,000 under the 2006 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games Act, which makes reselling illegal. An official ticket reselling site for members of the public who found themselves with too many tickets, will open in 2012.

LOCOG sold off some of the best tickets to the Games to three corporate hospitality agents (Thomas Cook, Jet Set Sports, and Prestige Ticketing) for a total of £40 million, the Daily Telegraph reports (J. Magnay, July 8, 2011). These tickets are now being sold for extremely high prices: the men’s 100 metre final packages are going for £270,000 for a group of 10. LOCOG told the IOC that sales of corporate hospitality for the Games has been particularly strong and that the commercial revenue raising was on track to deliver a Games budget of £2.15 billion as self-financing. Their report to the IOC revealed that the high-end corporate market will total around 200,000 tickets. Just 21,000 tickets were available in the UK public ballot for the men’s 100 metre final in an 80,000-seat stadium. In addition LOCOG has sold extra rights to the Olympic torch relay, live sites (such as Victoria Park in Tower Hamlets) and (remarkably) the Volunteer Programme, to raise an additional £21 million, and is expecting a further £8 million from similar extras by Games time. LOCOG

reported that 90 per cent of ticket requests from national Olympic committees and sponsors had been fulfilled.

The Daily Telegraph also revealed (M. Robinson, February 17, 2011) that the Government has ordered 9,000 Olympic event tickets at the taxpayers expense — costing up to £750,000 — to entertain dignitaries (such as royalty and top businesspeople) and international guests. However, civil servants who have spent a substantial amount of time working on the Games preparation will be forced to pay for their own tickets. Boris Johnson, the Mayor of London, in charge of buying allocations for the Greater London Authority, Metropolitan Police, Transport for London and London Fire Brigade, (and with 2,000 tickets at his disposal), has stated that no public money will be expended on Olympic tickets, and that all tickets will be used to ensure “London’s future and inward investment” (more of the same, different angle). Eleven London boroughs have refused to buy any Olympic tickets, fearful of council-taxpayer response. The refuseniks are Westminster, Kingston, Croydon, Havering, Barking & Dagenham, Barnet, Waltham Forest, Camden, Harrow, Bromley, and Redbridge. The City of London will buy its allocation out of private money (BBC NEWS, March 15, 2011; S. Dowding, Games Monitor Blog, March 16, 2011 after the Evening Standard). Councils are entitled to 100 prime seats for the Games.

Children, initially promised 120,000 free tickets, have been fobbed off with tickets for the football or Paralympic Games (J. Cheyne, Games Monitor, September 5, 2011). In London, one in eight schoolchildren is expected to get a ticket, but only one in 24 will get to see a core event. GLA member Dee Doocey commented: “Children were a big part of the bid in Singapore, and the promise has always been to use the Games to inspire a new generation of sports fans. It seems the scheme is more about packing football stadiums than giving London’s children the chance to see some of the most exciting events”. Cllr Chris Roberts from Greenwich Council was more forthright: “Olympic organizers have had five years to plan a ticket allocation which would permit the children of the Host Boroughs to attend the Games taking place on their own doorsteps. Instead, seven out of eight schoolchildren will be denied that chance. The children of the East End [...] have been called upon endlessly to take part in photo opportunities to build support for the Games and are even used in consultation groups to advise on how to run the Games and build a Legacy. Repeatedly, the Olympic Host Boroughs have offered to buy tickets for their children but have been refused. LOCOG don’t want the authentic East End, they don’t want our money, they certainly don’t want our kids” (S. Dowding, Games Monitor Blog, October 15, 2010, quoting Docklands24.co.uk).

In any case, in what can only be viewed as a brand enclosure, 2012 Olympic tickets could only be bought with a VISA card (along with cash and cheques), due to an exclusive deal. There are 91 million VISA card holders in the UK, compared to 40 million Mastercard holders and 4 million AMEX card holders. The deal will also mean that Mastercard and AMEX card holders will not be able to draw cash from ATMs, or make purchases at any Olympic site unless they have cash. Such sweetheart deals have been in place since the Seoul Olympics in 1988. According to Which? Magazine, the restrictions only apply to UK card holders; non-UK card holders will still be able to use other cards to buy tickets. Which? Magazine called on the Office of Fair Trading to step in (J. Lansley, The Guardian, June 24, 2010). In fact this brand enclosure looks like the biggest scam of all. Money will have been taken off people’s credit cards between May 10 and June 10, 2011 (H. Wallop, Daily Telegraph, April 25, 2011), but people will not have been notified until June 24 for which events they actually secured tickets. LOCOG have stated that the resale website, the only legal channel for people to resell their unwanted tickets, will not be operating until 2012. This means that ticket buyers would have had to pay the interest on their credit cards for at least eight months, regardless of whether they are using the tickets or not. According to the Bank of England, the average credit card interest rate is 18.84 per cent, which would mean that VISA could make around £50 million in Olympic-related interest payments before anyone can recoup their money.

2.5 Olympic pay and bonuses

The 228 permanent staff at the ODA are enjoying an average wage of £67,000 plus an average bonus of £13,700 on top, plus expenses (S. Dowding, Games Monitor Blog, July 23, 2010 after InsidetheGames.com; R. Ashworth, Daily Express, January 9, 2011). It’s hard to tell what the ODA’s former chief executive David Higgins, was paid — the Daily Express quotes the figures of £390,000

with a bonus of £214,000 in 2010, while the Daily Mirror (July 13, 2011) puts the figure at £325,000 in salary, £179,000 in “performance-related pay”, and £40,000 in employers pension contributions in a package worth £544,000. His replacement, David Horne was paid (according to the Mirror) £264,000 in salary, £79,000 in performance-related pay, and £48,000 in employers pension contributions in a £401,000 package in 2010/11. The Mirror reports that packages for the executive management board ranged from £218,000 to £544,000 (presumably Higgins). The ODA’s accounts for the same period showed that the ODA directors received packages worth between £257,000 and £372,000. The exception being finance director Gerry Luck who only receives £23,000 as a salary, £6,000 in bonuses and £3,000 in pension contributions. The executive management board, excluding the chief executive and the finance director, are in line for a share-out of £319,000 in bonuses.

The ODA has paid out vast fees to consultants — in one case, £2,800 per day to a staff member from accountancy firm Ernst & Young, who was helping with the ODA’s risk and audit functions — part of the £7.4 million that the ODA paid to consultants in 2010 (Daily Express, *ibid*). In the past three years, the ODA’s bill for all employees has ballooned from £18.7 million to £33.2 million, while bonuses have shot up from £531,000 to £3.1 million.

3. Infrastructure overload

3.1 Rail upgrades

Campaigning lobby group Rail Future welcomed the 2005 Transport Select Committee's recognition that proposals must fit into an integrated long-term transport plan" and leave a transport "legacy appropriate to the (ongoing) needs of [e]ast London". However, they query the extent to which the Government has agreed to fund basic improvements to the rail network in London.

Rail Future's submissions (July and September 2005) to the parliamentary Transport Select Committee highlight numerous improvements to the London rail network necessary for local, London, regional and international spectators to be able to reach the Lower Lea Valley precinct and other Olympic venues. Information below concentrates on improvements needed to the London network and is sourced from these submissions unless otherwise stated. Games Monitor is not able to comment on what changes have in fact been made since the reports were written.

Crossrail: The Thames Gateway London Partnership (a public-private partnership supported by all 12 local authorities) has stated fears that the Treasury would use congestion caused by Olympic developments as an excuse to delay the Crossrail funding package. The Crossrail tunnel is due to surface at Pudding Mill Lane by the Olympic Media Centre (J. Gardiner, Regeneration & Renewal, September 16, 2005). However, Crossrail itself is not expected to be completed before 2013. Rail Future (2005/1) suggests that a core section from the Western Portal to Stratford, operational with three key stations (Paddington, Farringdon and Liverpool Street) could be open and working in time for the Olympics to enable a limited Shenfield-Heathrow service. This option was supported by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (Rail Future, 2005/2). Rail Future (2005/2) recommended an upgrading of the Shenfield Line London 'Overground' route to deliver a five-minute interval metro service throughout the day to Gidea Park. This route would be required to handle city commuters and Stratford employees as well as Olympic visitors.

Javelin: The Olympic Javelin service, that will speed passengers from St. Pancras to Stratford in less than seven minutes, will cease after the Olympic event. Rail Future suggest that rapid dispersion of crowds travelling to and from the Games will be inhibited unless the new St. Pancras Midland Road station on Thameslink was fitted out and operational. Some Kent services may lose trains to provide the Javelin shuttle. "The importance of this service has been overemphasised[;][...] an independent consultant has argued that its actual capacity could be as low as 8,500 passengers per hour in each direction" (Rail Future, 2005/2).

North London Line (NLL): The campaign suggested that if this portion of Crossrail is not ready by 2012, traffic would be forced to rely on the North London Line, where, in 2005 the short trains and quarter-hourly service could barely cope (Rail Future, 2005/1). The campaign recommended platform lengthening and signalling improvements to service longer and more frequent trains on the NLL (three-to-four minute operating headways), interchange improvement at West Hampstead and Willesden Junction, a "requadrupl[ing] [of] the route between Dalston West Junction and Camden Road"; they also anticipated a diversion of freight traffic from the line during the Games period. Olympic traffic will demand more frequent and longer six-car trains, running at least every ten minutes. Additional rolling stock, compatible with the new East London Line trains is also needed. Their September 2005 submission also suggests that: "Planners might explore the practicality of running direct services from Heathrow to Stratford over the North London Line, as proposed route

improvements could offer capacity for a half-hourly daytime service after the morning peak, complementing the Heathrow Connect services". The campaign proposed extension of the North London Line from Stratford to Chingford, providing a direct link for commuters from Chingford and Walthamstow to Stratford and Hackney. A feasibility study in 2001 funded by TfL costed this project at £18 million, but the extension disappeared from TfL's London Rail Plan and the Olympic strategy.

East London Line: The campaign proposed (ibid) extension of the East London Line services to Highbury and Islington by 2012 (this line was planned to be operational only south of Dalston by 2012 but the Highbury extension was in fact completed in 2011), and to Finsbury Park serving the new Arsenal Stadium at Holloway, enhancement of platform and siding space at Stratford (to enable trains from East Anglia), and additional stops at West Ham on the C2C route (for interchange to NLL or the Docklands Light Railway) which require signalling changes. The Dalston East Link towards Hackney should also be reconstructed, they said, permitting trains to Hackney and Stratford from Croydon, Clapham Junction or Crystal Palace. Richard Pout states (2005/2): "This is fundamental to a long-term rail strategy for serving Hackney, Stratford and the Lower Lea Valley". The campaign suggested (2005/1) that extra capacity would be needed at Tottenham Hale, with additional track between Tottenham, Cheshunt and Bishops Stortford. An extra tunnel into Stansted, a pre-requisite for airport expansion, would improve route capacity and operational flexibility. A proposed half-hourly service from Stansted to Stratford required work by Network Rail. The potential for park-and-ride at Angel Road, using waste ground and two large retailers' car parks, they state had not been considered. Two new local stations just north of the Olympic complex, at Temple Mills and Lea Bridge, are regarded as essential to improve local access.

Thameslink: Some Thameslink traffic will go by Loughborough Junction and Herne Hill. Rail Future recommended upgrading these stations "well before 2012" to connect with Javelin services from St. Pancras. Enhanced Thameslink services would also benefit local access to the Wimbledon venue and provide a long-term and much needed improvement to the Metro services on the Streatham-Wimbledon-Sutton loop (Rail Future, ibid). Links to the Woolwich Arsenal site needed "further evaluation. There is still some uncertainty over the development of the Greenwich Waterfront Transit linking [the Dome and the Woolwich Arsenal] to Charlton, Plumstead and Abbey Wood stations. The Thames Gateway Bridge proposal also remains uncertain, and may not be completed by 2012 [...] Local buses will be needed to provide a shuttle to and from Woolwich Arsenal Station " (Rail Future, 2005/2).

Chiltern Line: The September submission also notes the absence of funding in the Wembley Park redevelopment for new Chiltern platforms to serve Aylesbury trains. It stated: "Claims that Chiltern's Wembley Stadium station cannot be rebuilt to accommodate three platforms are spurious. The Chiltern Line Evergreen II route expansion and service upgrade strategy does not include any enhancements to the Neasden and Wembley [or] South Ruislip section. Links between Stratford and Wembley are important. The provision of an alternative service over the North London Line would be beneficial. [...] [E]nsuring adequate platform capacity is available at Wembley Central and Stadium rail stations is also important" (Rail Future, ibid).

Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL): The CTRL will get spectators from St. Pancras to the Olympic site in Stratford in just seven minutes. In 2006, MPs voiced fears over public subsidy should the private sector consortium not have been able to sustain project risk (Press Association, May 4). The PA highlighted a report from the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee which revealed that "in bidding for the CTRL project in 1996, London & Continental Railways (LCR) forecast that passenger numbers using Eurostar would reach 21.4 million in 2004 but that the actual number for 2004 was only 7.3 million. The committee said that the initial aim was to transfer a high level of commercial risk to a private sector consortium 'which did not, however, have the financial strength or equity capital to sustain that risk if things went wrong'". Edward Leigh (Con. Gainsborough), committee chair stated: "[T]he economic justification remains marginal. No-one really knows how much money tax payers will be required to cough up in the future". The Government was committed to provide £285 million to meet last-minute budget overruns. Total estimated cost of the CTRL project is £5 billion (N. Temko, The Observer, April 30, 2006).

- Rail Future note that more attention should be paid to private sector investment in rail and bus infrastructure. Three public transport conglomerates provide contracted bus services in the TfL area. Richard Pout comments (Rail Future, ibid): "Ensuring adequate modern accessible buses

may, even then, be a problem, as contractors are unlikely to bear the risk of maintaining and servicing an enlarged fleet without some return on their investment”.

- “Transport problems remain ‘one of the biggest risks’ to the 2012 Olympic Games, a London Assembly report has claimed”, write the BBC (April 15, 2011) “The report, by the assembly’s transport committee, found the city’s transport network was already running at near-full capacity. During the Games more than a million extra journeys are expected across the busiest nine days”. Over five million visitors are expected in London during the Games period by the Daily Telegraph (E. Gosden, September 5, 2011), and [note the inflation here] three million extra journeys are expected each day. The Government (in the guise of the Department of Transport), reports the Daily Telegraph, wants commuters and Londoners to travel and work “differently” during the Games. Long-distance commuters are urged to try different routes, stagger their journey times to avoid the busiest periods, work remotely or use video conferencing for meetings. Those who live near their workplace are being urged to walk or cycle. The Federation of Small Businesses has considered advising its members to simply shut down during the Olympics rather than operate at 30 per cent capacity (J. Cheyne, Games Monitor, September 20, 2010).
- Olympic organisers LOCOG have been told to cut capacity by 25,000 at an equestrian event in Greenwich Park or risk transport chaos. LOCOG faces losing more than £1 million in ticket revenues if it complies with TfL’s advice (M. Beard, Evening Standard, September 9, 2011).
- A fleet of super-fast javelin trains has been withdrawn after frightened passengers complained of carriages “wobbling” at their 140 mph top speed. Operator Southeastern admitted the bullet trains, which cost a reported £258 million, were suffering from issues with “sideways movement”. Twenty-nine carriage trains are now being fitted with ‘dampeners’ to reduce the wobble (A. Hughes, SportsBeat, September 9, 2010).

[I]t is pertinent that the 2005 World Athletics Championship in Helsinki [was] to be staged at Picketts Lock, about eight miles north of Stratford. With hindsight, perhaps London’s failure was more due to apathy than overcoming the hurdle of providing the necessary facilities; a stadium and rail access to the site alongside the Lea Valley rail route to Stansted and Cambridge. Nevertheless, a major obstacle was the inflexibility and inability of both Railtrack and the train operator to provide a new station and extra trains needed to move 20,000 people to and from the new stadium each day. This must not happen for the Olympics, yet current proposals just do not stack up. [...] It is notable that Manchester’s Metrolink Ashton extension planned to serve the Commonwealth Games event remains moribund. Liverpool’s tram planned for completion in time for the 2008 European City of Culture festival has stalled. Funding streams will inevitably focus on the Olympics if the UK is to be a credible host, but this must not be at the expense of the regions.

Richard H. Pout (2005/2) Rail Future, Going for Gold; Delivering Excellent Transport for London’s 2012 Olympics

3.2 Olympic Route Network (ORN)

The Olympic Route Network, reserved road lanes to ease VIP and athlete traffic around London and the UK, links Olympic venues and accommodation. The ORN will service the 82,000 Olympic athletes, facilitators, media and the IOC dignitaries in driving smoothly to and from every venue every day. The ODA will have the legal authority to approve planned works on the ORN and to implement traffic regulation orders on the network during the Games. Initial reports suggested that unauthorised drivers could be fined up to £5,000 for using the lanes. Enormous disruption is anticipated. The ODA was reported to be considering putting Olympic lanes into the Blackwall Tunnel, which links the 2012 site to venues in Greenwich, although this was described by John Armitt, ODA chairman (sic) as “a last resort”. If this had gone ahead, the rest of east London traffic in Hackney and Tower Hamlets would be in gridlock, as recent closures (since 2009) of the tunnel have proven. Conservative London Assembly member Gareth Bacon called for the plan to be abandoned and Mayor Boris Johnson gave his word. However, somewhat craftily, TfL have demarcated the Blackwall Tunnel approach roads as part of the ORN but not the tunnel. East London, right up to Hackney, will probably be gridlocked anyway.

Mike Wells of Games Monitor details the strictures of the ORN: "To avoid delays to VIPs ordinary drivers will not be permitted right turns across the [l]anes. [...] Inconvenience to the Olympic Family is also to be minimised by the 'suspension' of 48 'signalized junctions', closure of 50 side roads, closing of pedestrian crossings, and the daytime suspension of parking and loading [...]. Electronic devices are to be located at traffic lights and fitted to the fleet of BMWs to ensure VIPs a green-light journey. [...] Black cabs, mini cabs, bicycles, buses, and non 'accredited' cars will be banned from the VIP Lanes. Infringement of the VIP space will carry a fine of £200. Emergency vehicles will be allowed in the [l]anes only when on an emergency. For ordinary Londoners simple tasks such as picking kids up from day care is likely to turn into a time-consuming nightmare" (© Mike Wells, Games Monitor February 16/17, 2012).

The effect on road delivery vehicles will be significant. "There's no way we'll be allowed to just pull up outside a pub that's located within the Olympic Route Network during the Games", said James Crosk of Tradeteam (www.roadtransport.com, December 14, 2009). Billingsgate Fish Market is on the route and will face difficulties receiving and sending out stock within the tight timetable. Restaurant owners in many parts of London have been told they will have to take their food deliveries at night (Daily Telegraph, June 13, 2011). "We are facing 100 days of disruption, rather than just the 28 days of the Games", Natalie Chapman of the Freight Transport Association told the Telegraph. The lanes cover 2.5 per cent of London's roads, and cost around £25 million (S. Dowding, Games Monitor Blog, July 29, 2010).

- London's 25,000 black-cab drivers are planning a blockade to bring the capital to a standstill over a ban on them using the 100-mile VIP road network during the 2012 Games (Evening Standard, June 13, 2011). The cab drivers say that they will be forced to increase prices if they are not allowed to use the ORN lanes. TfL, which operates the lanes, has offered dedicated drop-off and pick-up points at the Olympic venues. But the cab drivers say they will be unable to reach them because of the lane restrictions. They are also protesting bans on right-hand turns and U-turns on key routes. In 2009, black-cab drivers caused gridlock when they drove *en masse* to central London in a dispute with private hire taxis.
- A Channel 4 Dispatches documentary broadcast on Channel 4, February 14, 2012, showed two Olympic ticket resellers — Thomas Cook and JetSet Sports — including ORN access as part of their hospitality packages to wealthy clients (i.e. not Olympic sponsors). Liberal Democrat peer Dee Doocey described such a scenario as "seriously worrying", and told the Daily Telegraph that she had been assured by Mayor Boris Johnson that access was restricted to athletes, VIPs and IOC officials. The Telegraph described it (rightly) as a "scandal" (J. Magnay, Daily Telegraph, February 15, 2012).

4. Legacy

A Legacy body, the Olympic Park Legacy Company (OPLC), has been set up, half owned by the Mayor and half by the Government (D. Hipwell, Property Week, February 5, 2009; A. Warner, BBC News, June 15, 2010). Described as a “public sector-led urban regeneration style company with no planning powers” or land ownership, the core mission will be to secure investment and development from the private sector, and to set an economic strategy for the five host boroughs. Property Week reports that heavyweight UK developers have been brought in as ‘critical friends’ to advise on an informal basis on the Legacy and options for the masterplan, which is being designed by EDAW, KCAP and Allied & Morrison. The Olympic Park Legacy Company is chaired by Baroness Margaret Ford (see Section 1.1). In June 2010, the Mayor, Boris Johnson, announced a shake up of London government institutions, including the transformation of the OPLC into a Mayoral Development Corporation. Enabling legislation for this new body was passed with the Localism Bill at the end of 2011 and will be called the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC), opening for business on April 1, 2012. The LLDC will also subsume assets and responsibilities from existing regeneration agencies in the area, including the London Thames Gateway Development Corporation. It will have powers over the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and a wider area, including planning and development control (Paul Norman’s London 2012 Property Blog, February 8, 2012). Johnson now has the only veto of proposals put forward by Legacy officials. He also has the right to decide whether West Ham move into the Main Stadium (see below) (A. Warner, *ibid*).

In a further centralisation of Legacy decision-making, the Olympic Delivery Authority could wind up two years earlier than the 2014 scheduled date, under plans discussed since chief executive David Higgins left in 2010 (J. Gardiner, Building.co.uk, January 25, 2011). Under the plans, the ODA would close shortly after the Games in 2012. The body is understood to be keen to pass on responsibility for Legacy transformation works to avoid having to employ construction management staff while building effectively stops for a year in advance of the Games.

Chief executive of the OPLC, Andrew Altman, former deputy mayor of Philadelphia, warned that London might not see the full regeneration benefits of the Olympic Park for another decade (M. Beard, Evening Standard, October 2, 2009). Altman hopes to see almost 5,000 new homes by 2019 (the original figure was 9,400 [LDA, 2004/2, p 85], with 2,000 riverside apartments overlooking the stadium in addition to the 2,800 in the Athletes’ Village. Businesses would have moved into the Media Centre, and the parks and waterways would be (re)opened to the public by this date.

4.1. Venues

I’m afraid that it’s now too late [for London]. These mistakes happen at the planning phase, when you plan what to do and construct the facilities, whether you create permanent facilities or temporary facilities. Now is the time to concentrate on the Games and delivering an excellent Games”.

Sypros Capralos, former “Boss of Athens Games” talking to O. Chennaoui, Sky News, April 6, 2011

On September 17, 2010, the London Assembly released its report into the Legacy of London’s Olympic Venues (P. Norman, Estates Gazette Blog, September 17, 2010). Paul Norman’s comments follow. Firstly, the London Assembly’s Economic Development, Culture, Sport and Tourism

Committee lambasts “missed opportunities” in delivering the Games’ two crucial venues for regeneration: the Main Stadium and the Media Centre. It also calls for urgent decisions on the operation of the OPLC, stating: “Decisions need to be taken about whether the OPLC is simply to act as landlord to maximize income from the venues after 2012, or whether it will be a major, long-term force for the regeneration of east London. At the moment, it lacks the direction from central government, and the funding, to act as either”. Turning to the delivery of the Main Stadium, the report slates the Government for terminating talks in early 2007 to secure a major football club as an anchor tenant “only for the OPLC to begin pursuing the option again three years later”. It adds that it is “very disappointing” that new facilities for elite athletics have been prioritized in preference to “the regeneration [L]egacy and the need to make the Stadium financially viable”. The ODA should also never “have been given lead responsibility for recruiting tenants, given that its primary role is to construct the venues”. The report also states significant concerns over the marketing of the Media Centre from both the London Assembly and Hackney Council, and makes clear that there are problems with transport accessibility to the complex (backed up by Westfield’s John Burton).

Local authorities plan to retain certain infrastructure after the Games: the Velodrome, BMX arena, aquatics and hockey centres and the main Olympic Stadium in Newham; a conversion of one of the stadia to basketball in Hackney, which also hosts the Media Centre. Four sports arenas and three 50-metre swimming training pools will be moved to other parts of the UK. Maintenance costs for redundant stadia will be significant. When he was Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone allocated a mere £10 million a year for the upkeep and management of all the venues (R. Mendick, Evening Standard, July 5, 2005).

The Football Association (FA) named the Main Stadium as a potential (soccer) World Cup venue in their bid for 2018 (D. Conn, The Guardian, November 25, 2009). This would have directly challenged the way the stadium is being constructed, at a cost of £537 million of public money. Originally, plans were to remove 52,000 seats from its upper tier once the Olympics are over, leaving the stadium as a permanent athletics venue, which will fulfill a pledge by Lord Coe to the IOC. “The suggestion that the stadium could be retained with 80,000 seats until 2018 is, however, dismissed as fanciful by [G]overnment sources,” said The Guardian, “Tessa Jowell, former Olympics minister, is said to put the cost [of transforming the stadium into a World Cup venue] at £100 million to £150 million, because as well as ongoing maintenance, corporate and other spectator facilities would have to be built into the upper tier, and segregation of fans organised, to fit FIFA’s World Cup requirements. One source dismissed the idea as ‘the economics of the madhouse’”.

West Ham FC with Newham Council, and rival Premier League team Tottenham Hotspur, put in a bid for the post-Games use of the Main Stadium. Three years of talks with Leyton Orient and Saracens came to nothing (The Guardian, *ibid*). “Insiders put the ongoing cost at £1 million a year, and even some who see merit in the current downscaled plan also cringe that this modest venue is all London will be left with for its £537 million”, The Guardian said. The saga of West Ham versus Tottenham, bids and counter bids to take over the Main Stadium, has gone through so many twists, turns, accusations and false conclusions that the compiler of the Games Monitor background papers is wary of reporting. Julian Cheyne summed up the state of play on Games Monitor lightheartedly on September 5, 2011:

Still standing in the way are two football clubs. It had looked like Tottenham’s bid was over, but then the High Court agreed that Newham’s £40 million loan to facilitate West Ham’s East End hop from Green Street to Pudding Mill should be subject to judicial review. The prospect of that review stimulated BoJo to offer a different set of public funds to Tottenham, starting at £8 million with possibly more to come, to keep the club in North London. So, more than £48 million to keep two clubs in their home territories! That’s on top of the £486 million [or £537 million depending on who you read – Ed] spent building the stadium. That looked like a done deal, except it wasn’t. Tottenham, surprisingly, decided to pursue their judicial review [in August 2011].

The waters have also been muddied by the accusations of phone hacking against Tottenham, which West Ham and the OPLC claim that Tottenham has [proposed] to drop in exchange for an end to the legal case, and of corruption against West Ham, since dismissed by the OPLC, although the High Court judge thought they deserved further consideration.

Then there's [...] Leyton Orient, whose chairman (sic) Barry Hearn, insisted the club would "fight to the end to safeguard the future of [Leyton Orient] and if that means standing alone as the little guy against the powers that be in authority, then so be it". [Leyton Orient worries that their third tier club will struggle if a bigger club relocates near its Brisbane Road stadium].

Public funding of sports stadiums is presented as an economic investment. Newham justifies its loan to West Ham as a way of "boosting the economy through football". Likewise, with Tottenham Hotspur, a spokesperson for BoJo declared: "The hope is that all of this will allow Spurs to press ahead with stadium redevelopment. Boris has always been attracted to the idea that the football club should stay in Tottenham. It has been very important to him. Boris prioritised Tottenham as an important area for regeneration months ago".

However, these expectations of economic benefits are disputed in a study by Sarah Wilhelm, which found that "independent work on the economic impact of stadiums and arenas has uniformly found that there is no statistically significant positive correlation between sports facility construction and economic development". Her study noted how these academic studies differed from studies done by economic consultants hired by sports franchises or local chambers of commerce, which consistently played up the benefits. She put this down to a combination of factors including author bias, poor methodology, ignoring the substitution effect, overstating the multiplier and over-estimating the importance of the stadium in the local economy.

What Cheyne alludes to is a legal action by West Ham against Tottenham Hotspur and the Sunday Times over claims of "secret" payments to a senior Olympic Park Legacy Company executive during the bidding process for the Stratford stadium (O. Gibson, *The Guardian*, July 3, 2011). The club has confirmed that a senior executive at the OPLC carried out paid consultancy work on its behalf during the bidding process. But it insisted that the payments were above board and transparent. The company believed that the OPLC's director of corporate services, Dionne Knight, had authorization to carry out the work. The OPLC suspended Knight pending further investigations, and said that she had no authorisation, but stated that there had been no impact on the bidding process. West Ham's counter phone hacking allegations relate to a private investigator acting unlawfully reportedly under instruction from Tottenham Hotspur. The investigator unlawfully acquired bank and telephone records belonging to senior executives at West Ham and the OPLC. The matter currently lies with the police and the Information Commissioner's Office (S. Dowding, *Games Monitor Blog*, August 4, 2011). In the event, West Ham's bid collapsed in October 2011 after an anonymous complaint to the European Commission, and there are now 16 current bidders (including West Ham) looking to take over the site.

The Association of British Athletics Clubs has backed Tottenham's bid (along with the suggestion that the Crystal Palace Athletics Stadium would be redeveloped), claiming that retaining a running track — as West Ham would do — would provide little useful legacy for the sport (*Evening Standard*, January 31, 2011). John Bicourt, an ABAC officer who competed in the 3,000 metre steeplechase for Britain at the 1972 and 1976 Olympics, told the *Standard*: "Saying that there would be a proper athletics legacy merely by keeping the track at the Olympic Stadium is a myth and a sham. The true reason for those touting the Legacy myth is to save face over the wholly unrealistic promises made in Singapore by the Olympic bid team. West Ham, should they win the bid, would almost certainly demand the right to remove the track after a few years on the basis that the stadium is barely used for athletics enough to justify keeping it". Bicourt said that ABAC viewed Spurs' bid as a "realistic alternative" in that it would see the home of British athletics at Crystal Palace rebuilt as a 25,000 seat arena with the possibility of increasing the seats to 40,000 if needed. The *Standard's* comment on such outspoken opposition is revealing: "The ABAC are viewed privately by UK Athletics as an unrepresentative group of troublemakers, and the governing body insisted that almost all athletes past and present support their [own] stance". It is interesting that no byline appeared on the article.

Fans of the three soccer clubs have approached the OPLC, the Premier League, the Football Association and the Government, to protest against any Premier League club moving in to the Main Stadium at all (*ESPN/Associated Press*, February 2, 2011).

Without a tenant, the London Assembly's economic development, culture, sport and tourism committee has raised serious doubts about the regeneration legacy of the 2012 Olympic Park (B. Cook, Regen.net, July 1, 2009). It also dismissed the Legacy masterplan's proposals for 10,000 new homes, four new schools and a sports academy, as well as 10,000 new jobs, as "just aspirations". "None of these developments have agreed funding or identified delivery partners", the report complained, and concluded "[W]ithout decisive action, the stadium is in danger of becoming a white elephant".

- The financial pressures on Wembley could increase if the Main Stadium is retained in its 80,000-capacity after the Games, according to Wembley Stadium's chairman (sic), David Bernstein, who argued that there were only a maximum of 40 events a year that could fill a stadium of that size in London. Wembley made a loss of £23 million in 2008, once depreciation, interest payments, and tax were taken into account (O. Gibson, The Guardian, November 17, 2009).

"In the light of a National Audit Office report warning that the [Aquatics Centre] is likely to be over budget and late, and dismay at how the Zaha Hadid design has been compromised by two 'wings' of temporary seating, the Daily Telegraph has learned that the bid was over budget even at the bid stage" the paper reported, (P. Kelso, February 22, 2011). However, from what the paper says, it looks as if costs were deliberately underestimated by bid writers for public consumption. The paper continued: "In the bid book, the Aquatics Centre was costed at £72 million, but architectural consultants are understood to have advised the Government that £150 million was more appropriate. A source with knowledge of the discussions told The Daily Telegraph they were "surprised to find their advice had been ignored and a figure of less than half used for public consumption. On Tuesday, David Higgins, the former chief executive of the Olympic Delivery Authority, acknowledged that the bid book estimate was 'a joke'." The latest estimate for the cost of the Aquatics Centre is £262 million. After the Games, when capacity will be reduced from 17,500 to 2,500, the Aquatics Centre is not due to reopen until January 2014 and will cost an estimated £1 million a year to run (O. Gibson, The Guardian, January 28, 2011). A key bone of contention, writes Gibson, has been provision of leisure facilities that might attract local users. Newham Council was keen that the ODA build into its design the possibility to add wave machines and slides. But because of the increased cost and the constraints of the building, the plea was ignored, the paper reported. Instead those bidding for the pool will be asked to consider how they could provide portable leisure facilities to make it more attractive to families.

The Board of British Cycling and the Eastway Users' Group have expressed concern over the paucity of Legacy provision for road and off-road cycling competition and training. The Board stated to Singletrack magazine (June 11, 2007): "The two disciplines of Road Racing and [Mountain Bike] Cross-Country in particular represent a large and thriving element of the sport and until they are adequately catered for in the Legacy plan, British Cycling cannot endorse the Legacy proposals. [...] The Board has resolved firstly to register its objections in respect of the Legacy provisions directly at the highest level with the Olympic Delivery Authority with whom we have been working to achieve the right outcome. These 'cycling project sponsors' need to understand that the Board, the Regions and the user groups all share the same concern with what is being proposed as the Legacy 'Velo Park' [...] British Cycling will make a formal objection to the ODA Planning Decisions Team including a 'Request for Conditions to be Imposed' on the relevant application. This will state the case for Legacy cycling facilities to include a proper road circuit that can be fairly described as a replacement for what has been lost, and for an off-road competition facility that genuinely provides for racing at the level previously carried out at Eastway. [...] These requested conditions will cover the adequacy of the Road and Mountain Bike facilities in the light of previous promises and commitments made by the ODA and others and specifically in light of the conditions that had previously been attached to the Olympic planning consents that were granted in 2004 during the Olympic bidding phase". Cyclists at Eastway have also complained of a lack of consultation, and of the "marginal" nature of proposed facilities. The road circuit they describe as "unsafe" and say it does not allow for large fields to circulate; its layout is "uninspiring" and squashed up/cut in half by the A12. There is no possibility for safe concurrent running of road and off-road sessions of any kind. The plans are not suitable, they claim, for any cycle sport outdoors.

Meanwhile the Evening Standard reports that two of the biggest events (2012 triathlon and the 10 km marathon swim) are in jeopardy after the discovery of dangerous algae in the Serpentine. Swimmers are being warned that they may suffer skin rashes, eye irritation, vomiting, diarrhoea and

fever if they swallow the contaminated water, which can kill dogs and other animals. The algae appears only in the summer. A ban on the Serpentine could force LOCOG to utilize the Royal Docks in Newham.

4.2 Environment

Open space removed in 2007 from public use, and wildlife habitats destroyed will, we are told, be returned to us by 2020 "or thereabouts". We are asked to believe that there will be money after the 2012 Games for restoring our open spaces. We are also asked to believe that those in charge in 2012 will remember and honour commitments made by their predecessors. Backing this bid requires us to do a lot of believing and to trust those to whom we hand over our open space. What evidence do we have that our trust will be justified? What evidence do we have to date of the respect for their commitments of those involved in the Bid? It took London 2012 and the London Mayor only the six months between July 2003 and January 2004 to renege on their commitments not to build on our open spaces. We are now being asked to believe that they will stick to their commitments over a 13-year period.

Anne Woollett, former Chair, Hackney Marsh User Group

Following previous posts pointing out that the 2012 Olympic Park is not the claimed "largest new park in Europe in 150 years", there was some hurried hype revision and the ODA downgraded it to the biggest "park in the UK for 100 years" while other fellow traveller agencies drifted off message and settled for "biggest new park in London for 100 years". Ignoring small matters such as it not actually being a proper park at all (the OPLC describes it as an "urban space"), another park has been identified which (a) is in London, (b) is bigger than the open space promised in the Olympic Park (110 ha according to Ealing Council against 102 ha of 'virtual' Olympic parkland), and (c) was completed in 1996. As the Northolt and Greenford Countryside Park Society say on their web page, [the Ealing park is] the biggest park to be built in London in the last 100 years! That means that the Olympic Park would possible be the biggest new park in London for 16 years when it opens in 2012, except that most of the 'open space' won't be parkland, won't be completed or accessible for an indefinite period, or will be surrounded by building sites till kingdom come.

Charles Batsworth, Games Monitor Blog, December 30, 2010

The London Olympic Games and Paralympic Games Bill (2005), which set up the Olympic Delivery Authority, was criticised early on for a lack of Legacy provisions. Local lawyer Laurie Elks set out the problem in a letter to Meg Hillier MP, November 7, 2005. §4(3)(a) requires the ODA "wherever relevant" under its executive functions to "have regard to the desirability of maximising the benefits to be derived after the London Olympics"; §5(5)(b) provides that under its planning functions the ODA shall have regard "in particular" for "the desirability of maximising the benefits to be derived after the London Olympics from things done in preparation for them". Elks charged that "the Bill envisages the ODA as both developer and — in some sense — its own regulator", and suggested that the ODA's longer-term planning functions will not survive as part of the core mission once budget and time constraints start to hit in. He also suggested that while the planning applications contain commitments to landscaping and certain aspects of environmental restoration, it is "wholly unclear where commitment resides for the maintenance of the ecology and environment of the Park after the Games are complete". Responsibility, he said, could fall to the local authorities, the Mayor of London, the City Corporation or the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority, without any funding commitment to go with it. In February 2012, it was announced at Space Studio's Legacy Now 6 event, that the park will be managed by Balfour Beatty Workplace, in consortium with local regeneration company Renaisi and environmental charity Groundwork (S. Dowding, personal communication), while its ownership seems to reside (as of April 2012) with the new London Legacy Development Corporation in partnership with the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority which retains ownership of Eton Manor (Paul Norman's London 2012 Property Blog, February 8, 2012). The involvement of Groundwork suggests that volunteer and coerced labour will be deployed as part of the management strategy. A bid put forward by the Wellcome Trust and PLP Architecture for the freehold of the entire area of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, the Athletes' Village and the legacy neighbourhoods was scuppered when developers Delancey with Qatari Diar bought the Athletes' Village for £557 million in August 2011 (see above).

- As Julian Cheyne and Charles Batsworth point out on the Games Monitor Blog (October 12 and 15, 2010 respectively), the name 'Queen Elizabeth' is just another brand, market-tested with possible investors, local boroughs and businesses (clearly no Republicans in the audience!). According to Cheyne, the British Olympic Association was unhappy with the loss of sole brand rights to the Park's name and tried to extract £10 million before it would agree to the compromise.
- The future park has come under fire in aesthetic circles. Architecture critic Deyan Sudjic, writing in *The Observer*, May 28, 2006, criticised the design priorities of the masterplan for prioritising the 17-day event to the neglect of landscaping. Kathryn Moore, President of the Landscape Institute, has also criticised the ODA design panel for the lack of a landscape architect among its members (www.euopaconcori.com, June 10, 2006). However, development of the masterplan was led by landscape architect Jason Prior, managing director of consultancy EDAW.
- The ODA has been criticised severely for neglecting design issues on three highway bridges proposed for the Olympic Park's loop road (T. Wilner, *Regen.net*, September 18, 2008). The Commission on Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) said: "We continue to have serious concerns about the way the bridges have been procured and dealt with in the planning process. In particular, we challenge the ODA's practice of separating architecture and landscape from engineering and urge them to take steps to ensure that all infrastructure elements are designed as a coherent whole". The comments are identical to criticisms CABE made of another Olympic highway bridge in March 2008.
- Discussions are ongoing between the ODA and the Manor Gardening Society of allotment holders, temporarily resited at Marsh Lane Fields in Leyton, in the planning of Legacy allotments. Writing before discussions began, the plot holders expressed concerns that the new site should function as a community-in-itself, as part of the wider community, and as a refuge for wildlife. They hoped to be sited on the western river bank alongside the Media Centre to capture some of the feel of the original plots and be close to Hackney and Tower Hamlets, boroughs with inadequate allotment provision. They have suggested that one aspect of the Media Centre use be dedicated to allotments, food, cooking and education. The ODA promised more than the 83 allotments provided by the former Manor Gardens site within the Legacy Park. Current Legacy plans have split the allotment area in two and placed them at opposite ends of the Olympic area.

4.3. Housing

Architects were ordered to reduce the number of apartments in the beleaguered Athletes' Village by almost 1,000, reported Robert Booth in *The Guardian* (September 6, 2008), which will mean that during the Games five athletes will have to share each apartment rather than four. An earlier report on the Games Monitor discussion list (July 3, 2008) suggested that the then developer Lend Lease was planning to house six athletes per apartment. Overall new build space will be cut from four million to three million square feet to help cut costs. A number of high rise blocks in the development have also been abandoned. The *Evening Standard* (M. Beard, November 11, 2008) reports another casualty, a £10 million health centre (polyclinic) that was to be part of the Athletes' Village has also been slashed as a result of the financial crisis. The long-term developer of the site, however, is still under a Section 106 obligation to provide a clinic at a minimum size of 2,800 square metres. The OPLC has revised the total amount of Legacy housing down to 8,000 (J. Cheyne, *Games Monitor*, July 6, 2010). The time frame on this is not clear: as reported above, the chief executive of the OPLC, has said that he hopes to see only 5,000 built by 2019.

Legacy proposals promoted affordable and social housing quotas of 50 per cent. These have now fallen by the wayside (reduced to 35 per cent [D. Hill, *The Guardian*, March 22, 2011]) thanks to Tory administrations in both City Hall and Westminster, although each borough retains a quota of nominations. Historically, social housing has benefited the more wealthy working class, and the New Labour push towards part-mortgaged "affordable" housing (minimum salary £26,000) and housing association lettings was no exception. Olympic developer Triathlon Homes has demanded a lettings plan for the social housing component that would select the majority of tenants for the Athletes' Village on the basis of whether they have a job (N. Duxbury, *Inside Housing*, July 23, 2010), that

is, on the basis of a social discrimination, while Dave Hill reports (The Guardian, March 22, 2011) "Soon 'affordable' will demonstrate still greater elasticity. Next month [April 2011] Mayor Johnson will bring into effect his First Steps policy programme, making 'intermediate' schemes available to family households with incomes as high as £74,000 a year — rather more than a member of parliament is paid — compared with the present £60,000. (See policy 1.2C on page 22 of his London Housing Strategy). Meanwhile, the government is preparing to bring in what it calls its new 'affordable rent' model, which will underpin the finances of housing associations. This will require the introduction of housing association rents at a level of 'up to 80 per cent of gross market rents' in the area concerned — a figure far higher than the highest at present". Meanwhile, top floor apartments in the Athletes' Village will be sold for up to £1 million after the Games are over (I. Pocock, Sunday Times, June 11, 2006). Developments around the River Lea and Bow Back Rivers right down to the Thames are being marketed as part of a Water City vision (London2012.com, May 22, 2006).

Architect Sir Terry Farrell has asserted the need for massive housing construction in the Lea Valley and along the banks of the Thames rather than the brownfield areas of the Thames Gateway and John Prescott's other slated growth areas across the South East (C. Clover, Daily Telegraph, July 22, 2006). The scale of building in the (now former) Thames Gateway area has been attacked for the lack of enforcement of sustainability criteria, and for a lack of supporting infrastructure, including water provision (Green Building Press, March 21, 2006). Other critics highlight the hazard of flooding (E. Leadbetter, BBC News, August 23, 2006) and the permanent displacement of private-rental tenants. While Games Monitor would endorse this latter fear as realistic, the University of East London quotes a 2001 study by the Australian McQuarrie Bank which suggested that the Sydney Olympic Games had only minor impact on the rental market. The study found that prices in the Olympic area increased by less than 0.5 per cent above the city average for 1996-2000. UEL has proposed that all London and east London median rental values and house price changes be assessed both during and after the Games (A Lasting Legacy for London, May 2007). Unsurprisingly, given their aforementioned prediction, they also won the contract to monitor this. Given news reports of blatant opportunism and evictions by east London landlords (Section 2.1 above), it will be interesting to see what they conclude.

Previous Olympic Games developments have produced a 'gentrification' effect on the housing market in areas surrounding the Games locations. This is caused by the anticipated and actual improvements to those areas arising from massive infrastructural investments. The most vulnerable sector of local populations who have suffered negative impacts on their housing in other Olympic cities are the poor with insecure tenure on their homes. In east London it is those who live, often in overcrowded privately-rented accommodation under short-let tenancies, who are the most vulnerable. With rents rising in a boom market they are likely to experience rent increases above the average for London and/or be given notice by landlords seeking to profit from property values rising faster than regional rates. This is a population that already has an annual 'churn' rate of 40 per cent. Although the LDA are committed to building up to 42,200 homes in the region up to 2016, the provision of suitable new affordable homes in the region is unlikely to keep pace with the displacement of private rental tenants. I am not aware of the LDA having in place policies to monitor or ameliorate the effects of this gentrification during the planning and construction phases of the Olympic developments in east London before the construction of an adequate supply of affordable housing is available. The possibility of the displacement of poorer privately-rented tenants needs to be properly evaluated and addressed at the earliest opportunity to avoid us all becoming spectators of the downward pressure on the local underclass which has occurred in Beijing, Athens, Sydney, Atlanta and Barcelona.

Martin Slavin, Probable Impacts of the Lower Lea Valley Developments (Particularly the Olympic Phase) on Tenants in Privately-rented Accommodation, September 25, 2006

4.4 Other infrastructure

Olympic energy demands are in direct competition with the City of London. Pete Warren (The Guardian, May 29, 2008) reports that demand for cabling to provide power for data centres the City relies on has outstripped supply. This combines with a shortage of electrical engineers and

server space. The problem, according to Warren, is the sheer size of the Olympic project. Infrastructure for the 2012 Games will demand more than 100 km of electrical cabling and the building of more than 100 substations. "The City has been told there can be no more computer centres until after the Games", Warren claims. Demand is rising in the City and Docklands as it is. Warren notes that the City of London, with a power demand of 1,000 MW, is expected to need 80 per cent more over the next five to seven years, while Docklands, with a power demand of 250 MW, is expected to need an increase of 90 per cent over the same time frame. Telehouse, which ran the computer network for the Beijing Olympics, is one firm that has been allowed by energy supplier EDF to expand. Coincidentally, it will also be providing the 9,000-plus servers that will be needed for the 2012 Games.

The Mayor Boris Johnson's decision to hold a private, invite-only competition for the Observatory Tower, which will overlook the Main Stadium, has caused resentment in the architectural press and profession. In an outspoken comment piece (Blueprint, January 2010), Tim Abrahams accuses Munira Mirza, Johnson's director of cultural policy, for choosing an advisory panel from a narrow band of art-world curators ("Nicholas Serota, Tate Modern director; Julia Peyton Jones, director of the Serpentine and its curator Hans Ulrich; ODA 'art wonk' Sarah Weir; an ex-CABE chief, and a token engineer: these are individuals who don't need much encouragement to play safe"), who then approached the usual suspects, against the advice of holding an open competition. Abrahams fulminates: "The suggestion that there wasn't enough time to set up an open competition is a convenient nonsense, designed to deliberately preclude ideas that are truly challenging. It would've taken a small practice no longer to pull together a team and an idea than it would an established one". He continues: "Putting aside the fact that the Mayor's office is privately riding roughshod over the very procurement laws that they support publicly, it has ignored the one thing that is actually a real quality of London's creative industries. There is at least a democracy of ideas here. A good idea, no matter where it comes from can thrive in London. [...] One senses in these organisations a genuine distaste for sporting ideals, particularly open participation. The cultural administrators are cynical about the idea of the Games as an open playing field upon which the world can participate and the best be rewarded. This will only end in bad art and design". Anish Kapoor's ArcelorMittal Orbit (in partnership with Arup engineer Cecil Balmond) won the commission, and a scaled model was revealed to the press in March 2010. It received a mixed reception, and has been slated by architect and president of the Royal Academy, Nicolas Grimshaw (Bdonline, July 6, 2011), as a "missed opportunity". CABE sent the proposals back to the drawing board, stating that the design had some "mundane" flaws in its entrance pavilion, viewing platforms, lift and stairs (J. Cheyne, Games Monitor Blog, August 13, 2010).

- At a meeting of the GLA Olympics Committee, Anna Harding, chief executive of Space Studios, criticized the 2012 Media Centre as a 'damned insult to Hackney' and said it was outmoded. Finding a tenant could be a problem. John Burton, director of Westfield's Stratford City project, thought the Centre was too far from Hackney and Stratford railway stations. Charlie Forman, chief officer of the 2012 Olympic Games for Hackney Council, opined that "it was not as future proofed as we would have liked". (J. Cheyne, July 21, 2010).
- A cable car link across the Thames costing £50.5 million will connect the Greenwich Peninsula to the Royal Victoria Docks (or the O2 arena to the Excel Centre, both Olympic locations). The scheme's cost was estimated to be £25 million when the project was first announced in July 2010 (P. Crerar, Evening Standard, April 18, 2011). Debates rage about whether the scheme will be ready for the Games or not.
- Mayor Boris Johnson's dreams of a mobile phone network installed on the London Underground in time for the 2012 Games have been dashed. Transport for London and mobile phone operators (including O2, Vodafone, Everything Everywhere and 3, along with the French engineering company Thales, agreed to abandon the project over funding issues and the technical complexity of installing it in time (The Guardian, April 1, 2011).

5. Paying for an elite

5.1 Financing elite athletes

Athletes waiting for funding to finance their training complained of delays by then Chancellor Gordon Brown in allocating money to the British Olympic Association (BOA) (E. Harris & P. Waugh, Evening Standard, February 5, 2006). The BOA stated that it needed £500 million to develop young athletes. The Chancellor refused to announce a decision until after the March 2006 budget. Three athletes announced that they were quitting because finance had not been made available. Ben Brown, who appeared on one of the London 2012 promotional posters, told the Standard:

Everywhere I look, there are 2012 posters and instead of filling me with excitement, they now make me feel sick, depressed and defeated. There are obviously large amounts of cash out there which are being spent on creating an attractive London arena for 2012, but not a penny is being spent on young British athletes who might bring home a gold medal.

A meagre £15,000 a year would have enabled Ben Brown to train full time. Another gymnast, Daniel Carr, also said that he had been forced to quit because of a lack of money. Carr suggested that a grant of £2,000 a year for two years until he is 20, and then £6,000 a year until 2012, would have enabled him to carry on. The training facility both Brown and Carr used, the Sutton School of Gymnastics (a school gymnasium) was reported to be considering closing at the end of 2006 unless it received funding to bring it up to national standards. If this happened, another Olympic hopeful, Laura Coggin, who appeared in the London 2012 promotional video and was tipped as a medallist in 2012, would also be forced to give up training as there were no other suitable facilities nearby. Treasury claims to be lining up £250 million for athletes' training, "on top of another £250 million committed already" proved false. In the event, Brown delivered under half of the BOA's demands. On March 23, 2006, he announced only a £200 million commitment over seven years to "widen the pool" of athletic talent in addition to £60 million already targeted at athletes regarded as potential medal winners (L. Gray, The Scotsman). The Scotsman reported that it was hoped a further £100 million would be forthcoming from the private sector. This masks the extent to which the private sector will be called on to finance sports and the training of elite athletes in the run up to the Games. Mihir Bose of the Daily Telegraph (March 23, 2006) revealed that LOCOG aimed to raise another £600 million from the sector, and that the British Athletes' Association plan to link all the governing bodies to a FTSE 100 company. Sports bodies seeking money from the National Sports Foundation, a baby of the Chancellor's with a budget of £37.5 million, will be required to match funding pound for pound, again from firms. UK Sport are charged with looking for the £100 million sponsorship indicated in the Chancellor's speech. Bose concluded: "[This] means business will have to provide close to £1 billion in sponsorship over the next six years".

5.2 Sportswear a sweatshop industry

"Postmodernity means if anything coercion" (Cooke, 1988). The counterpoint of the disciplinary subject, honing a body without limits at corporate behest, the 'celebration of excellence', is sweated labour on the fringes of Europe and in the Far East. Oxfam, fair trade and trade union campaigners have highlighted factory exploitation and health hazard in the internationalised manufacture of sports clothing, footwear and other goods in their Fair Olympics report Play Fair at the Olympics, Respect Workers' Rights in the Sportswear Industry, 2004, <www.fairolympics.org/en/index.htm>. The report was drawn up for the campaign around the 2004 Athens Olympic Games.

What comes out of the report is an indictment of the labour conditions of flexible specialisation, the post-Fordist regime hegemonic in international garment and footwear industries. Ruthless price competition in the USA leaves suppliers in “a market characterised by falling unit prices, juxtaposed with rising production costs [...] [F]actories are now required to supply smaller amounts on the basis of monthly or even weekly orders. Lead times have been shortened” (ibid, p6). Corporate giants such as Puma, Fila and Nike, have split production, keeping design, marketing and (at times) retailing functions, and outsourced production, assembly, finishing and packaging to manufacturers in low-wage locations. Through aggressive buying policies, the corporations apply intense pressure on intermediary and factory firms to compete. Contracts are based on short-term targets, and a generalised insecurity in the industry (relocation of production is frequent and across borders) leads to an avoidance of standards laid down by both national regulation and international labour covenants. Companies operating as mid-chain managing agents of outsourcing, often transnational players themselves, exert their own pressures toward cost cutting and the speed-up of delivery, and impose fines on factories failing to meet these stringencies and deadlines. These sanctions are passed down to sweatshop workers, who are then fined for extra material needed to make good mistakes, fined for each individual faulty product, and expected to work unwaged in their own time to meet ‘just-in-time’ production targets.

The report interviewed workers in Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Bulgaria and Turkey between May 2003 and January 2004. Workers at the end of the supply chain bear the brunt of market and retail pressures, a situation exacerbated by pressure on national governments from institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, to force labour market flexibility and increase the limits of the working week. Governments often turn a blind eye to regulatory infringements. Factory discipline is founded on the authoritarian relations of patriarchy and religion, with sexual harassment and verbal assault of sweatshop workers reported as common. Excessive working hours, a steady erosion of piece rates, forced overtime (well beyond country legal limits), a denial of rights towards collective organisation and collective bargaining, health injuries, casualisation and seasonal fluctuations in employment are the product of this demand-reflexive system. Wages of garment and footwear producers often slack to a minimum (or nil) during downtimes. While transnational sportswear companies maintain charters stipulating ethical commitments, the report states that evidence suggests “factory managers [at a local level] simply falsify the evidence during social audits and carry on with business as usual once the inspectors have left” and states further that “[t]he fact that workers are not adequately involved in the current compliance processes has meant that few substantive or sustainable improvements have been made” (ibid, p7).

Sweatshop workers complain of health hazards inflicted by this regimen, including miscarriages brought on by compulsory overtime-working following shifts, exhaustion, back pain, diarrhoea, dust allergies and respiratory diseases, stomach flu, eye damage, varicose veins, and repetitive-strain injuries. Hours are excessive: one Chinese worker complained of working non-stop for 13-14 hours a day in peak time; an Indonesian woman was forced to work standing up in a factory all day, without much rest, water or food. Another woman spoke of disrupted relations with children and family (ibid, pp 20-21). Punitive sweatshop regimes have sparked factory strikes.

There are five people living in this small narrow room. It is very hot, and some of us lose consciousness in the heat. Our living conditions are very bad. Our bosses make us pay so much of our salary for the ‘boxes’ we live in. They charge us high prices for electricity and water, even though we often do not receive it.

Garment worker from a Cambodian factory, producing for Fila and Puma, quoted by Fair Olympics, ibid, p 20

We have overtime work until 11 pm or midnight every day. The price they pay us is so low, so there is no point to us working such long hours. If our income was higher, I would have no complaints. But all we have now is exhaustion and a low income. Some of us do not even have enough money to spend on food. It is more than we can bear.

Garment worker in factory supplying Nike, Fila, Arena, Adidas and Reebok, quoted by Fair Olympics, ibid, p 21

The Fair Olympics report demands (ibid, pp 9-10) that sportswear companies develop credible labour-practice directives to ensure suppliers meet international labour standards, including the right to a living wage based on a regular 48-hour maximum working week, no forced overtime, and a workplace free from harassment, along with labour and social protection, and an end to child labour. They state that sporting companies should change their purchasing practices to ensure that these do not exacerbate the exploitation of workers (i.e. negotiate a 'fair' price with suppliers that reflects the true costs of production and allows the supplier to meet ethical labour standards, and to develop more long-term relationships with suppliers and factories), and to establish collective bargaining and trade union membership as a basic principle for trading. There should be an ongoing dialogue between sportswear companies and the International Garment and Leather Workers Federation via sectoral framework agreements. The report also calls for transparency in the impact of these business operations on manufacturing workers.

The authors charge that the Olympic movement needs to make a serious commitment to respect of workers' rights in the sportswear industry. The IOC, via the various country Olympics and organising committees, should be insisting that the sportswear industry meet international labour standards. The report calls for the IOC to make a public commitment to workers rights in its charter and to reform its rules on licensing, sponsorship and marketing agreements in this light. Their demands are based on precedent:

- The report quotes a Code of Labour Practice, negotiated with the Australian Council of Trade Unions and the Labour Council of New South Wales in 1998, which was adopted by the Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic and Paralympic Games (SOCOG) in Sydney 2000 to cover the manufacture of licensed goods. The code required the payment of 'fair' wages, limitations on working hours, respect for rights of freedom of association and collective bargaining. Although enforcement measures in the initial agreement were superficial (relying on the organising committees rather than the trade union bodies themselves), after much campaigning by Australian unions, in 1999 SOCOG granted the Textile, Clothing and Footwear Union of Australia the right of access to information about workplaces producing licensed goods and the right to send representatives to speak to these overseas workers (ibid, pp 48-49).
- On September 3, 1996, the global-regulatory body for soccer, FIFA, agreed to a Code of Labour Practice for FIFA-licensed products, after it was exposed that child labour was being used to manufacture FIFA-sponsored footballs in Sialkot, Pakistan. An estimated three quarters of the world's soccer balls are manufactured in the town. Criteria based on the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work were later included in FIFA licensing agreements. However, the Clean Clothes Campaign (one of the sponsors of the Fair Olympics report) have charged FIFA with a lack of enforcement (ibid, pp 48-49).
- The World Federation of the Sporting Goods Industry (WFSGI), a trade association including transnational sports brands, retailers and manufacturers, introduced a revised Code of Conduct in 2000 based on standards outlined in ILO conventions. The code acknowledges the industry's influence on the social and economic conditions of sporting goods manufacture, and commits its members to ensure compliance with the Code in both their own operations and in their suppliers. The report suggests, again however, that "[a]lthough the Code is comprehensive on paper, the WFSGI has done little to implement it" (ibid, p 49).

Fair Olympics conclude:

The Olympics can directly influence the sportswear companies by including contractual obligations on labour standards in its licensing and marketing agreements relating to products bearing the Olympic emblem. At the very top of the hierarchy, the IOC is the owner of the rights to the Olympic marks, including the five-ring emblem, and is responsible for the overall direction and management of all Olympics marketing and licensing programmes. While it is the national committees and the organising committees of the Olympic Games themselves that actually issue the licenses and marketing contracts, the IOC has the power to determine the overall policies and set the rules. If the movement as a whole made a commitment to respect labour standards, similar to its commitments on protecting the environment, it could play an important role in achieving improvements to working conditions for the many workers who produce sportswear worldwide (ibid, p 51).

Comparisons between corporate profits and elite athlete sponsorship are galling. Pre-tax profits of sports corporations match Olympic finance. The report notes Nike 2003 profits of US\$1.123 billion, Adidas 2002 US\$408.9 million, Reebok 2002 US\$195.5 million, and Puma 2003 US\$320 million. Prominent sports people get paid over six-figure sums simply for an association with corporate brand. David Beckham can expect US\$161 million Adidas sponsorship over his lifetime, basketball player Grant Hill received US\$7 million 1997-2004 from Fila, tennis player Venus Williams, sponsored by Reebok, US\$38 million over five years, runner Marion Jones US\$800,000 per year from Nike, and swimmer Mark Phelps US\$300,000 per year from Speedo (ibid, pp 31-32).

- Child labour and sweatshop conditions were prevalent among manufacturers for the 2008 Beijing Olympics, the Playfair Alliance (an international grouping which includes the British TUC) has revealed. At Le Kit Stationery, a company in Guangdong, researchers found 20 children on the production line. "The youngest was only 12. These youngsters had been hired during the school holidays and were working from around 7.30 am until 10.30 pm, doing the same jobs as adults. Forced overtime, harsh fines, the punishment of workers, and wages less than half the legal minimum were among the various violations uncovered in the factory which does not give its 400 employees any contract of employment", the Alliance said. It found 3,000 workers at Mainland Headwear Holdings' factory in Shenzhen were paid as little as 45 per cent of the local minimum wage. They were forced to work overtime far in excess of the legal limit. 'Workers who resign are fined one month's wages by the company, while the whole workforce is given instructions on how to lie to outside inspectors about wages and conditions. Any worker who tells the truth faces dismissal, while those who follow the factory's 'answer guidelines' are given a financial reward. The researchers also found exploitative practices at the Yue Wong Cheong company's production lines in Shenzhen and Eagle Leather Products bag factory in Guangdong. Guy Ryder, general secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation, said: 'We warned the IOC that failure to take the necessary action on labour standards would lead to situations such as these, bringing lasting damage to the name and reputation of the Olympic movement. Unfortunately, our call has been ignored. This must not happen again'". (J. Carvel, The Guardian, June 11, 2007).

As a postscript we should say that the British TUC has led a coalition to campaign for workers rights within the Olympic industry, and that this includes the plight of international workers making the clothes, souvenirs and other products for the 2012 event. The coalition produced a report *Toying with Workers Rights* (available from Playfair2012.org) which investigated working conditions in two factories in China producing the Olympic mascots, Wenlock and Mandeville, and London 2012 pin-badges. The report is shocking, even for those who have read earlier Playfair publications. Researchers working undercover in the factory found: (1) Poverty pay, in some cases below the legal minimum, where workers were not paid enough to cover their most basic needs, and benefit payments for pensions and medical insurance were not paid in accordance with Chinese law. For example, a worker making an Olympic mascot could be paid as little as £26 a week, while a mascot can retail for around £20. An average living wage is around £225 a month. (2) Excessive overtime, sometimes up to 100 hours a month, nearly three times the legal limit in China. Some workers were doing 24-hour shifts, while others were working seven days a week. Overtime was often compulsory. (3) Child labour was used in the factory producing pin badges. (4) Workers were locked into a five-year contract and had to pay a fine if they tried to leave beforehand. At one factory, workers were not given a contract of employment, and in the other factory, workers did not receive pay-slips. In both factories, workers did not fully understand how their wages and over-time were calculated. (5) Workers did not receive health and safety training in both factories, and would tend to forgo wearing protective equipment, when provided, so they could work faster and earn more — to top up their poverty pay. (6) Workers were prevented from joining unions in both factories, and it was made clear to them that anyone engaging in trade union activities would be dismissed. (7) Evidence of audit fraud — with workers coached on how to answer auditor's questions, and in some cases bribed to give the correct answers.

The coalition did much behind the scenes lobbying of both LOCOG and the IOC. Belatedly, LOCOG agreed to the following:

- The publication of the names and locations of the factories in China and the UK covering 72 per cent of the licensed products produced for London 2012, with a focus on licensees with production remaining.

- Making information about employment rights — based on national laws and on LOCOG's ethical code — available in Chinese and English, and establishing a Chinese language hotline so that workers can complain if their rights are being violated.
- Providing training to some of the workers in Olympic supply chains to make them more aware of their rights.
- A commitment to work with Playfair 2012, the organisers of Rio 2016 and the International Olympic Committee to ensure that future Games benefit from the lessons learned.

The coalition have stated that LOCOG has gone further than any other organising committee to protect workers rights. While the timing and agreement seem totally inadequate, this is an ongoing campaign, and one can only hope that more advanced inroads are made against sweatshop labour for other major sporting events, including the Rio Olympics 2016. The coalition comprises Labour behind the Label; TUC; International Textile, Garment and Leather Workers Federation; International Trades Union Confederation; Clean Clothes Campaign; Maquila Solidarity Network and Clearing the Hurdles.

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